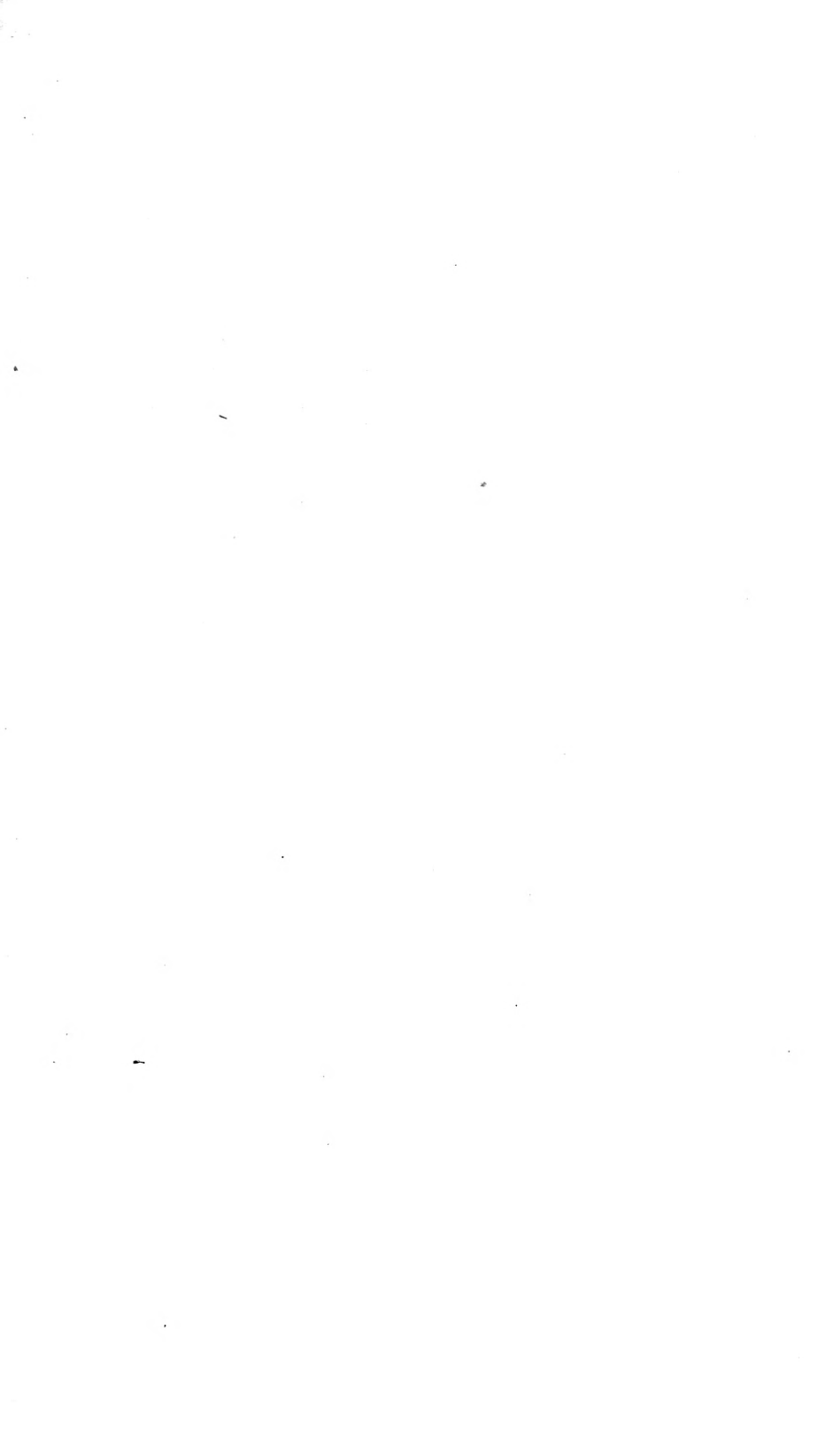
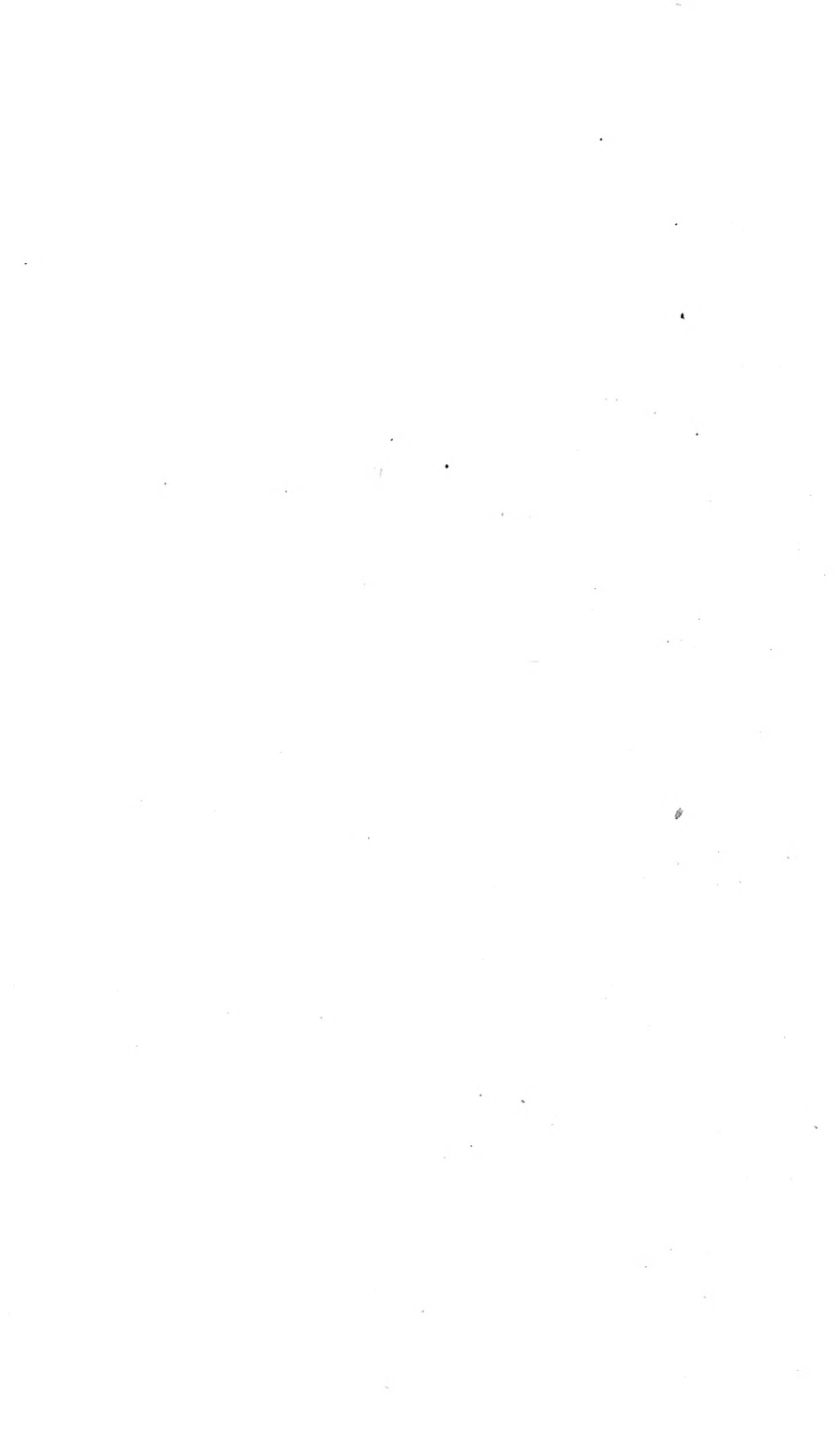


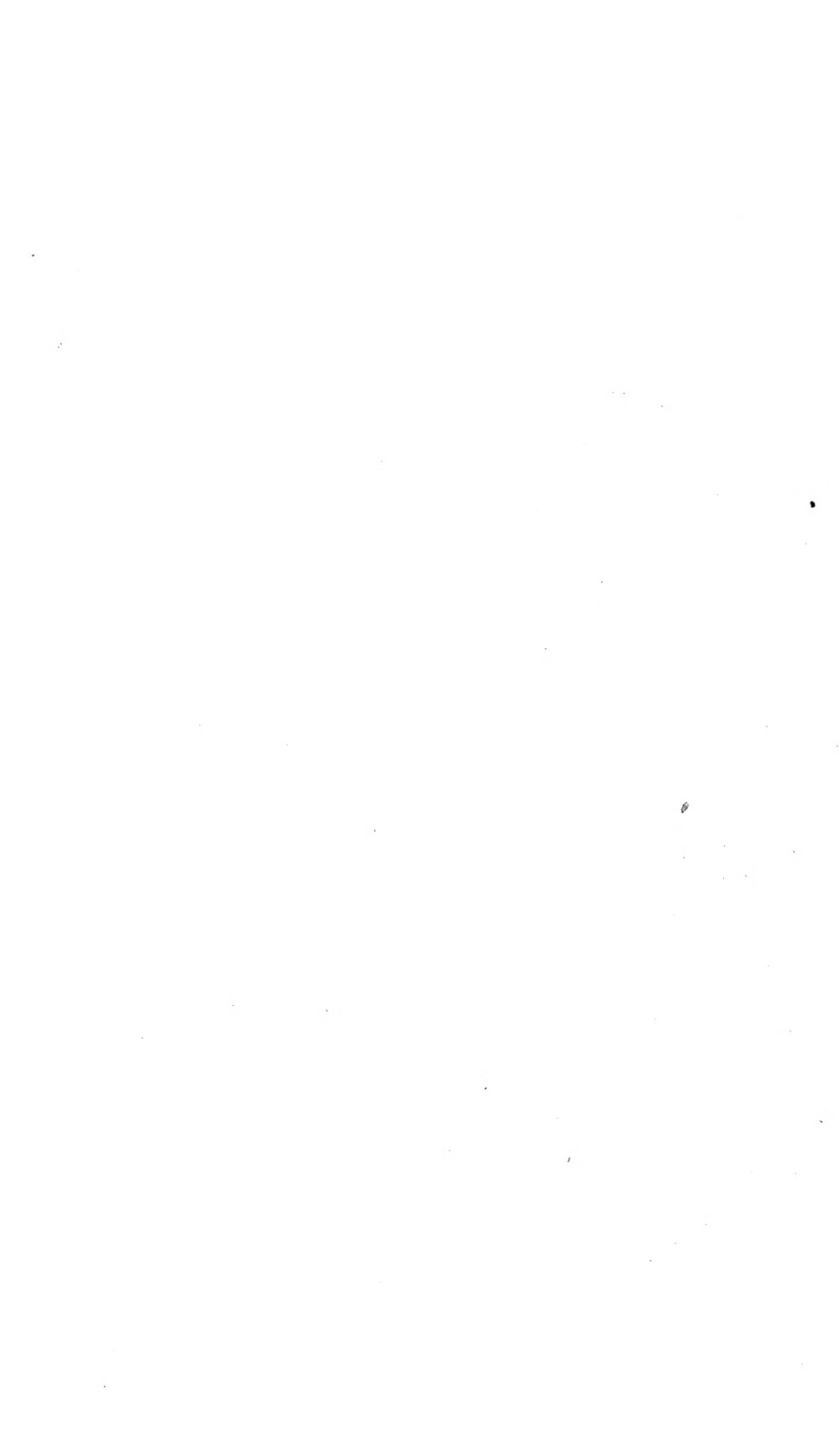
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Central Univ. of N.Y.





DR. SKINNER'S ANSWER TO DR. MORRIS.

To the Editor of the Cincinnati Gazette:

The question raised between Dr. Morris and myself, the discussion of which you have kindly permitted, is one of the greatest interest to many of your readers, and I ask a place in your columns in order to reply to his letter of the 21st inst. If it affords the Doctor pleasure to call hard names, and invoke partisan and political odium, and he thinks it will help his cause, I make no objection to his method. It is not a mode of argument that suits me, and I will carefully avoid it. Many gratuitous allegations, strained and exaggerated, many personalities and innuendoes unworthy of this discussion, I pass by, preferring to let them speak for themselves. They ought never to have been made.

The repeated appeals for sympathy, and the effort to invoke prejudice against me, while the question is purely one of law and order, sound doctrine, fealty to our own constitution, observance of vows by professing Christians, and comity among the Churches, do not disturb me. Dr. Morris asks why I "pass by" Messrs. Morey, White, and McCune, "to accuse and arraign" him? My answer is, first, I did not "pass by" his co-Presbyters; and, second, if to say that certain conduct is inconsistent with ordination vows and loyalty to the Presbyterian Church, is accusation and arraignment, I plead guilty with a decidedly good conscience.

But now to the main business.

After his preliminaries, Dr. Morris reduces all he has to say to four practical questions, rather to one general question, with four particulars arranged under it, viz.: "Was it right, wise, or commendable in itself?"

(a). To form the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church?

(b). For this church as formed to call a pastor, and for a Presbyterian minister to accept the call and settle among them?

(c). For a council, such as met, to recognize the church and install its pastor?

(d). And for Dr. Morris to sit in that council, re-examine Mr. McCune, and preach the installation sermon under all the known circumstances of the case?

Dr. Morris takes the bold, open, and positive ground, that it was "right, wise, and commendable" for him and other Presbyterian ministers to do these things, and that there was nothing therein inconsis-

tent with fealty to the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church. Let us look at this position.

In November, 1874, "an address to all Christian ministers and churches in North America," devised in Cincinnati, was issued in the interest of a new, undenominational organization of the whole church of Christ. Next, a "Christian Union Convention" was held in this same interest, in Suffolk, Va., May, 1875, a "basis of union" and "declaration" being published to the world, the topmost signature appended to which is that of Rev. W. C. McCune, which had been "unanimously adopted and signed, October 2, 1874, at the Rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, Cincinnati, Ohio." A similar convention was next held in Cincinnati. The style and title of the new denomination was the "Union Christian Churches of North America." That this so-called anonymous undenominational denomination is nevertheless a veritable denomination, is clear from these facts:

1. It adopts a distinctive name.
2. It appeals to all to join it.
3. It posits a creed and basis of union.
4. It receives ministers.
5. Its aim is, like Aaron's rod, to swallow up all the "sects."
6. It claims to be the primitive New Testament pattern of the Church of God.

Its anti-denominational animus and broad liberalism is the central reason for its existence. It arraigns existing evangelical denominations as "essentially sinful," "condemned in express terms by Scripture," "wrong," "displeasing to the head of the Church," "injurious to the Church," "putting stumbling blocks in the path, and ready excuses in the mouths of sinners." The "remedy" it proffers for this gigantic evil is the abolition of all denominations, by their absorption into the new organization. "All vexed questions" as to doctrine and order, it commits to the "broad and free domain of Christian Liberty." Distinctive principles it calls "divisive," seeks to sink them and to exalt every possible point of unity.

The L. and M. L. Church is the legitimate outgrowth of this movement, as Dr. Morris was well aware. It was not a mere casual association of persons grouped together from necessity, and with no other design than simply to worship God, as Dr. Morris would have us believe. It was the practical result of this new anti-denominational effort; its special aim was perfectly understood. It was a new thing, to the genesis and birth of which Mr. McCune had devoted himself. A "declaration" of its principles had been published previously, and sent to those who were invited to the council, in which the position is

taken that Christ has left on record "no provision in the New Testament for the organization of different denominations." The sophism was used that, because "the inspired apostles never organized different denominations," therefore, no evangelical denomination has any Scriptural right to exist; a sophism refuted long ago by Chillingworth, when defending the Reformers and the Reformation. The Churches of Christendom are expressly called "needless denominational churches," "a manifest reproach to the cause of Christ," and their creeds, as such, "directly contrary to Scripture." With these facts fully before him in print—I have these words from Dr. Morris himself—"I think we can safely take part in the council by which this Church is to be organized, and as safely install Brother McCune as its pastor."

And now, in reply to Dr. Morris' general question, "Was it right, wise, and commendable" for him and others to do what was done under these circumstances, in the organization and recognition of the L. and M. L. Church, I shall first state what is not exceptionable, and then what is exceptionable, in this whole subject, and what was, in my judgment, inconsistent, not only for him, but for the three other Presbyterian ministers of Cincinnati to countenance.

I—What is not exceptionable :

1. Any minister of Christ has a perfect right to preach the doctrine of Scriptural union, spiritual and ecclesiastical fellowship, charity and good will to all, and all that is involved in the communion of saints, and to strive after more blessed and closer relations with all Christians, and no Presbytery nor "Presbyterian Bishop, self-sent and irregular," can take it away.

2. Any number of Christians have a perfect right to leave their churches whenever they deem it best for their own good and the glory of Christ, and, having first taken their letters of dismission, then unite to organize another church on a Scriptural foundation, and no one has a right to object.

3 Any Presbyterian minister has a perfect right to sit in a council of evangelical ministers, called together by an evangelical church or churches, and contribute his presence to their deliberations in the organization and recognition of a church, provided the church to be organized and recognized stand in its polity and creed upon a Scriptural foundation; and any Presbyterian minister has a right, having first obtained consent of his Presbytery, to accept a call from such a church and be installed as its pastor.

II—Now as to what is really exceptionable :

1. No minister has a right, while under vows to his own denomination and remaining in it, to teach or preach that it has no Scrip.

tural warrant for its existance ; that all evangelical denominations, as now existing, are "needless," "divisive," "essentially sinful," and a "manifest reproach to the cause of Christ." He may go out from it and do this, but to remain in it while so doing, is to condemn himself, his brethren, and his order, together with all the churches of Christ in the world. It is openly to repudiate his own engagements to maintain its integrity, its doctrine and polity, its peace, unity, and purity. The manifest result, should all act on this principle, would be the instant dissolution of every church in existence.

2. No Presbyterian minister has a right to teach or preach that the distinctive doctrines of his church are "divisive" of the body of Christ, or that they stand in the way of that spiritual unity for which Christ prayed, or that these distinctive doctrines should be "dropped off" whenever it may be practicable," or pushed into the background, for the sake of coming to his standard of ecclesiastical or non-ecclesiastical uniformity, or for the phantom of a general undenominational organization.

3. No Presbyterian minister has a right to share in either the organization or recognition of a society which builds itself upon any of the above principles, or declares that its mission is a protest against the distinctive creed and polity of his own church. To do so, is to protest against himself and his own church, and to teach all church members to undervalue the very things he was solemnly ordained to esteem and defend.

4. No Presbyterian minister has a right to recognize as Scriptural officers in the Church of Christ any men who have been appointed as "overseers" by an ordinary motion and vote of the people, or even by an election, who are yet without Scriptural ordination and bound by no vows whatever to any defined system of church government. Only very recently the Reunited Presbyterian Church has uttered its unanimous protest against the recognition of mere "committee men" as having any power of jurisdiction whatever in the house of God,

5. No Presbyterian minister has the right, in the "interim" or out of the "interim" of the meetings of his Presbytery, formally to accept a call to any church whatever, or to be formally installed over it as pastor, except by leave of the Presbytery. The reasons for this are perfectly obvious, and need not be stated ; and no alleged instance of the violation of this organic law can be pleaded in its justification.

6. No Presbyterian minister has a right to install a co-Presbyter upon a creed and over a church which holds as matter of indifference the peculiar and distinctive tenets of his own church as to the orders of the ministry, baptism, the Lord's supper, the form of church gov-

ernment, discipline, and mode of worship; all which tenets he has pledged himself to defend and maintain.

7. No minister of any denomination has a right to teach that a voluntary society, without ordained officers, is a scripturally organized church of Christ. And no Presbyterian minister has a right to organize any church whatever without the permission of his Presbytery, or take refuge, for this purpose, behind an irresponsible council convoked through his instrumentality. To organize a church is a function reserved solely to the Presbytery, to be effected, either directly by the whole body, or indirectly by a committee or an individual; in both these cases, however, under express authority. The so-called organization of the L. and M. L. Church was effected either under the supervision of Mr. McCune himself, the so-called "overseers" being appointed, but not ordained; or by the council met to recognize the so-called church and install the pastor. No church officers were ordained in either case. To call such a society a scriptural church organization, then solemnly re-examine Brother McCune to give him a new indorsement, then install him as a Presbyterian minister to be its pastor, and then solemnly to recognize and commend this unorganized alliance as a scripturally organized church of the Lord Jesus Christ, was a farce, to say the least of it, at which sober men might well smile. How could Dr. Morris and his Presbyterian brethren perpetrate such an absurdity?

8. No Presbyterian minister has a right to belong to two different denominations at the same time, especially when one of these is a standing protest against the existence of the other as unscriptural, and its avowed aim is to sink the distinctive tenets of the other for the sake of union. This is too self-evident to require enlargement or illustration.

9. No church member has a right, while remaining undismissed from his own church and in covenant therewith, to disregard his solemn vows and enter into another church organization for any purpose whatever. His solemn engagement to the new one is a renunciation of his sacramental vows to the old. And no Presbyterian minister has a right to countenance such irregular procedure; and yet this is what was done in the formation and recognition of the L. and M. L. Church.

10. No church member has a right to belong to two different churches at the same time, especially when the second is a standing protest against the Scriptural right of the first to exist. He can not be faithful in his duties to both, nor can he be the subject of two conflicting jurisdictions. This also is too plain to need illustration.

11. No set of Christians, least of all undismitted church-members, have any right whatever to organize a society of any kind and baptize it as a church of Christ, while they ignore the fundamental principles of church polity as laid down in the sacred Scriptures. The L. and M. L. society has no ordained officers of any kind whatever, and we challenge any one to show us a scripturally organized church without such officers in it. The reason for the course of procedure among the L. and M. L. people is very manifest. According to Mr. McCune's published statement in the GAZETTE of the 24th inst., he went among them, he and they "mutually concurring" to form just such an abnormal society as has been created. Either to have ordained elders, or to have asked permission from his Presbytery to do this thing, was not "nominated in the bond" among so many confederate and conflicting beliefs as to church polity. It would have been "distinctive," "divisive," and "denominational." Dr. Morris would have us believe that only "provisional arrangements" in the interim of Presbytery were effected. Strange conception! Let him look at his own published declaration in the council, that the L. and M. L. people "have now resolved to organize themselves *permanently* as a Church of Christ.' Pray, what is it to "provisionally" organize "permanently," or "permanently" organize "provisionally?" These arrangements were of the very essence and enduring substance of the whole scheme. Viewed from whatever angle, there is no Scripturally organized church there at all, while yet it is recognized as such by Dr. Morris and his co-Presbyters. That Mr. McCune, therefore, while a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, did form a new society in its very bosom, as a standing protest against his own and all other denominations as "needles, sinful," and a reproach to the cause of Christ," and form it with a mere committee, complimented as "overseers," and called it a church organization, and joined himself to it without leave of his Presbytery, and that Dr. Morris and other Presbyterians did assist to install their own co-Presbyter over it as pastor, also without leave of Presbytery, and bid it God-speed, is transparently clear as the cloudless sun at noon. And it is just as clear that the L. and M. L. society has not been authoritatively recognized by any Church of Christ in existence, or by any council representing any Church of Christ, or that Mr. McCune has been re-examined by any such. It is about time that men should cease abusing this word "represent," and that ministers should understand that they do not "represent" the denominations to which they belong, when they voluntarily go as individuals to attend conventions and meetings of one sort or another.

And now, then, in direct answer to the question of Dr. Morris, "Was

it right in itself, wise, and commendable" to do such things, or to countenance the doing of them? I answer, emphatically, thrice over, *No!* Was it for the peace, unity, and purity of the Presbyterian Church? I answer a hundred times *No!* Was it consistent with solemn vows taken to maintain and defend the doctrine and order of the Presbyterian Church as the true doctrine and order of the house of God? I answer ten thousand times *No!*

Some Presbyterian defenders of modern liberalism and broad-churchism, are welcome to assert that the position I take would be "high-church even at Rome," which, in plain English, is to say, that the Presbyterian order they would have vowed to support, surpasses the Papacy itself in illiberality and despotic power. I do not wonder they desire a new denomination, but that my friend, Dr. Morris, being a representative of the Presbyterian Church in two of its high places of trust, should even countenance by his presence the revolutionary conduct which has evoked this discussion, is, in my judgment, inconsistent with our ordination vows. And that in more than two closely printed columns of a secular paper he should lay out his strength to palliate or justify the irregularities and unconstitutional acts above mentioned, and appeal to the general public for sympathy in the same, is, to me, a matter of great regret. If the masters of the house do so, in what may not the humbler servants indulge? If the captains of the Lord's hosts speak so, what language may we not soon hear from the lips of the rank and file?

I trust I am liberal in my spirit as any man can be, but, with me, the truth of God's word, and fidelity to my engagements, can never be thrown aside to encourage that phantom of union which, if we are to be logical, the L. and M. L. Church symbolizes as the "best contribution to millennial unity," and, after eighteen centuries, as the only instance, yet extant, of the fulfilment of our Lord's intercessory prayer. And I hold, as strongly as any one can, that it is the imperative duty of the followers of Christ to aim at bringing about a true union of all the different parts of the household of faith upon a Scriptural basis. But that such a union may be effected by the abolition of the evangelical denominations, or the assertion that they are all "essentially sinful," or that the L. and M. L. Church is a forelight of millennial glory, I can never believe.

Dr. Morris says: "The *real question* is whether the Christian sentiment of Cincinnati will condemn this little band of believers for what they themselves have done for the honor of Christ and the establishment of His Gospel among them?" In the light of what has been said as to the origin, nature, and aim of this organization, and of what

has been actually done, how utterly inadequate a statement is this? No, this is not the "*real question*." The real question is whether ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church may combine to countenance the proclamation to the world, that their own denomination has no scriptural right to exist. The real question is, whether they may be encouraged in such procedure, and what is to be the harvest in years to come of such seed sown now? The real question is, whether a latitudinarian union is to be held superior to ministerial vows, and whether the prayer of Christ is a prayer for such union as is illustrated in the organization and recognition of the L. and M. L. Church?

Dr. Morris endeavors to show that the new movement is not *anti*-denominational, though *undenominational*. In my humble apprehension, it would require a genius more gifted than Aristotle to furnish any solid reasons why Christians should secede from existing denominations for the express purpose of creating a new undenominational organization, unless it were that they were "*anti*" as well as "*un*"-denominational in their principles. What earthly reason can be given for being *undenominational*, unless it is that they are *anti*-denominational? But their published declarations are already decisive and conclusive on this point. Surely, if, as is asserted in the "address" and "declarations" alluded to, denominational churches are "needless," "divisive," "essentially sinful," "a manifest reproach to the cause of Christ," and "displeasing to the Head of the Church," how ridiculous a figure would men cut who claim to be not *anti*-denominational, but *pro*-denominational while yet *undenominational*? Or are they to be left, like Mahomet's coffin, swinging in the air between wind and water, neither *anti* nor *pro*, but simply *un*? Beyond all question, the merest consistency compels them to be opposed to all denominations whatever, and this is the only possible meaning that *undenominational* can bear.

And all this would be true, even if the war record of Dr. Stuart Robinson had been identical with that of Dr. Morris, or if Beauregard had danced with a Southern army to Boston, as Sherman did with a Northern one to Savannah. What logical value is there in the allusion to Dr. Robinson, when he is known not to be the author of the articles in the Christian Observer reflecting on Dr. Morris' course?

In conclusion, I answer once more the question of Dr. Morris four times repeated, viz.: "Was it right, wise, and commendable," etc., by saying, No. And no plea based upon the blessed communion of saints, and no argument urged from considerations of brotherly love, the broad spirit of the Gospel, and the fellowship of all who are one in Christ, can avail in the least to change this answer. After every

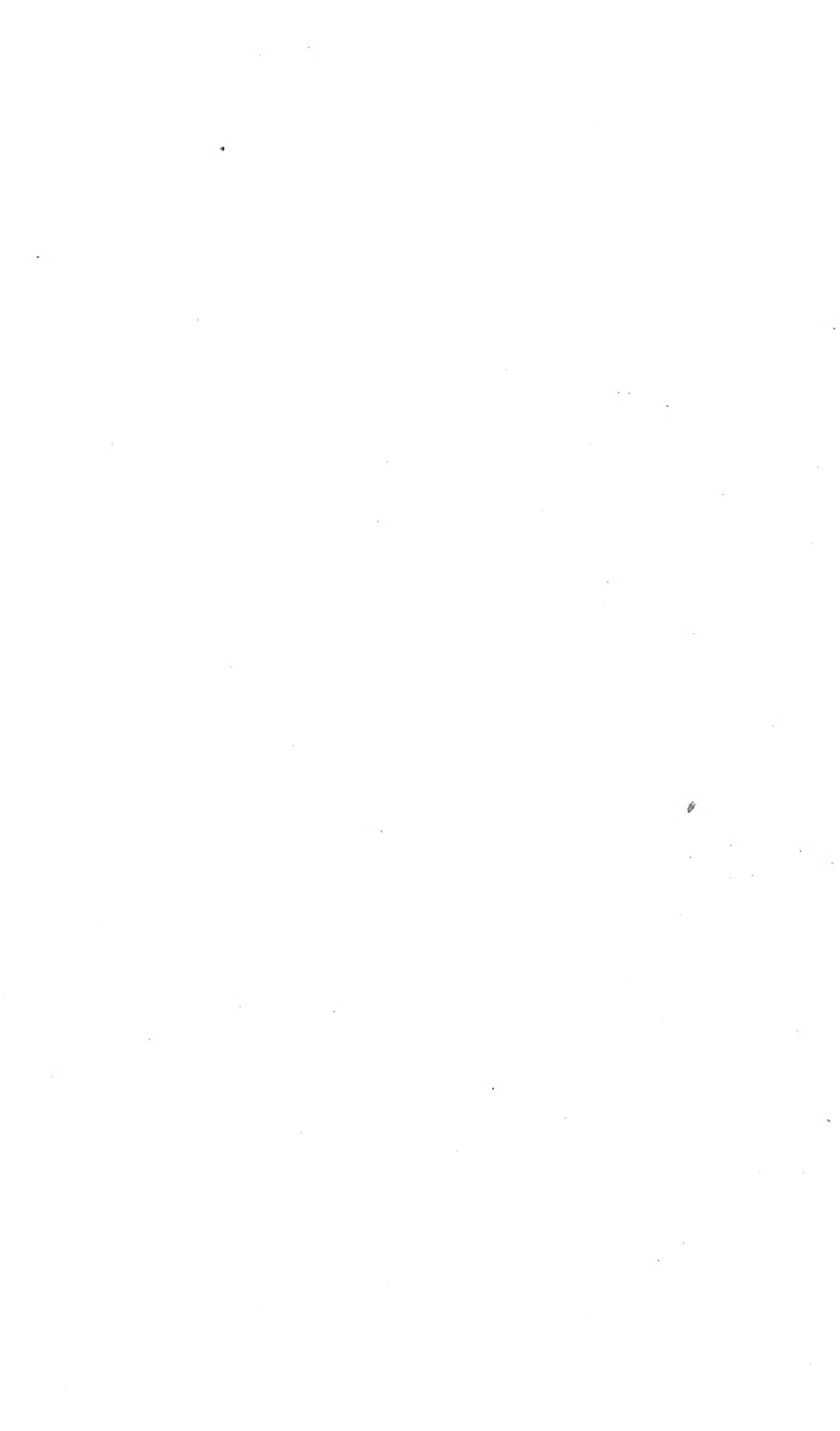
plea has been made, the question still returns, Are we faithful as Presbyterian ministers to our ordination vows to maintain the doctrine and order of the Presbyterian Church, if we countenance such declarations and proceedings as those which have emerged into history in the organization and recognition of the M. and M. L. Church? No emphasizing of the principles of Christian fellowship can sink this question out of sight.

Already seven or more public journals have planted themselves squarely on the ground I have taken, and I am sure it is impregnable. No man loves Christian fellowship more than myself, and none more earnestly desires that the young men under Dr. Morris' instruction should have large and liberal hearts to all whom Christ has received. But if the distinctive principles of faith and order they are soon to vow solemnly to defend, are to be held up as "divisive" of the body of Christ, and they are to be taught to "drop off all differences, whenever they find it practicable," and to countenance and multiply such organizations as this new one, I would myself prefer they should either not take their consecration vows, or, having taken them, should as speedily as possible relieve themselves of the same.

Presbyterians can not be too loyal to their church in this day of latitudinarian tendencies and broad-churchism, when the cry of union, indiscriminate and unreflecting, has become the watchword of so many. Evermore, truth is before union, and not union before truth, and if there is one fact clear and outstanding in the history of the church, it is that the mutilation of her doctrines, and the schisms that have followed, have been the result in every case of the lax use of the power of the keys.

With such a sentiment as this, and with the profound conviction that in our time, when the "spirit of the age" is crying "progress and reform" on every hand, we need to be intensely careful as to the truth of God and the order of our church. And so, with the kindest personal regard for those who differ from me, I subscribe myself, very sincerely yours and theirs, in the bonds of the grand old Presbyterian Church,

THOMAS H. SKINNER.



DEFENSE

OF

Presbyterian Doctrine and Order

AGAINST THE

FALSE UNIONISM *AND* LIBERALISM OF THE TIMES.

By THOMAS H. SKINNER,

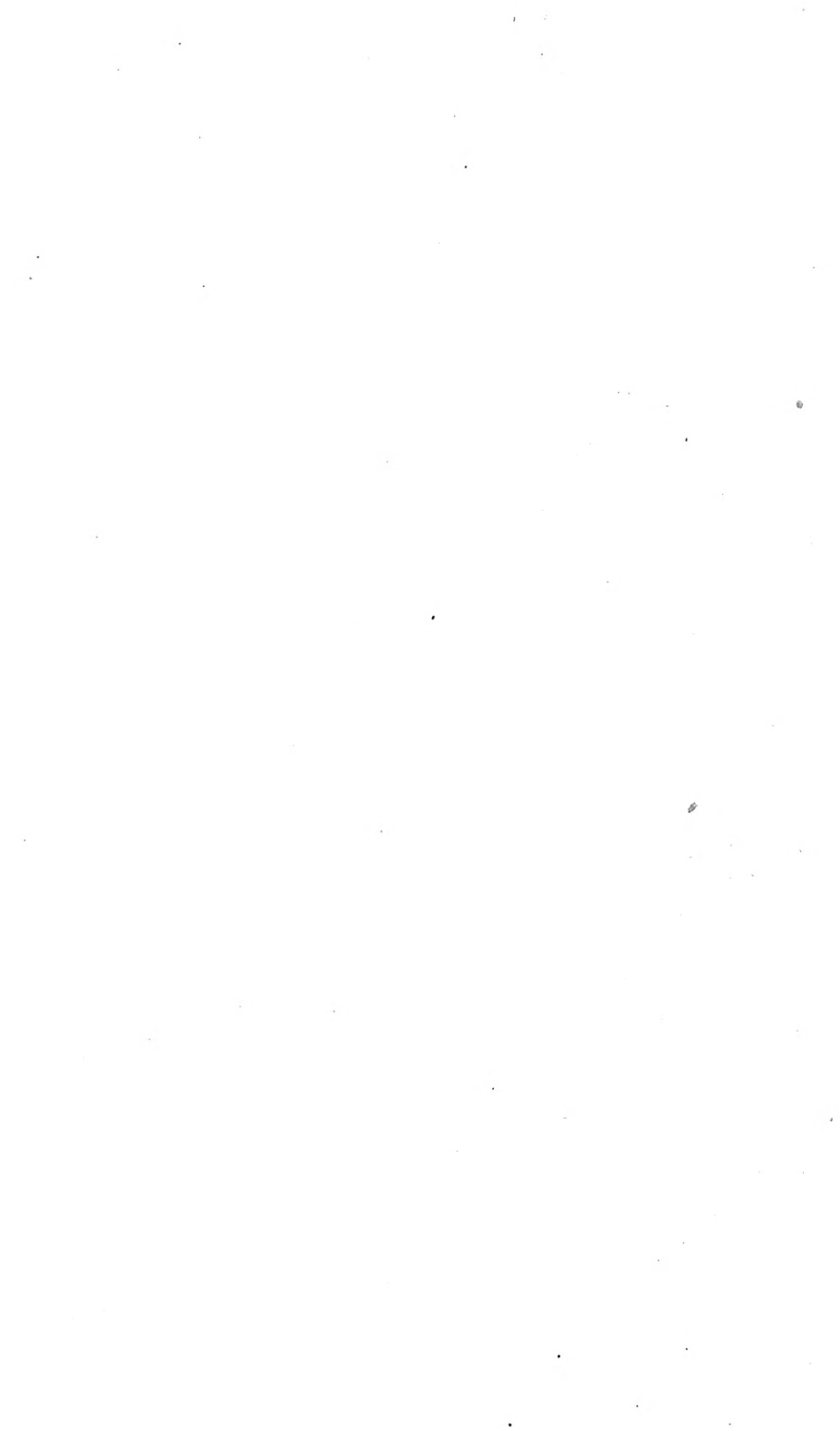
Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, O.

"I have dared to lift up the Banner that is fallen down."—John Calvin.

CINCINNATI:

GAZETTE COMPANY PRINT, N. E. COR. FOURTH AND VINE STS.

1876.



INTRODUCTION.

THE history of the publication of this Suppressed Speech can be told in a few words. The Presbytery of Cincinnati met April 12th and 13th instants, at Glendale, Ohio, in its regular Spring meeting. Under a conviction of duty, and having received many letters from distinguished ministers in our church expressive of their sense of the need of speedy action by the Presbytery in reference to the Linwood and Mt. Lookout organization, and the principles of Mr. McCune in which it was founded, and having been virtually challenged to bring the matter before the Presbytery, I introduced the following Preamble and Resolution, as coming under the Episcopal power of the Presbytery, provided for in the Form of Government, chap. 10, sec. 8, in the clause "to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline seriously and reasonably proposed, and to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the church;" a function distinct from the exercise of elaborate forensic process involved in the same section, viz, of "judging ministers." The object of the paper was simply to officially discountenance the theories and practices of Mr. McCune, and the irregularities connected therewith, and declare them inconsistent with official membership in the Presbyterian Church.

"Whereas, It is well known to members of this Presbytery that the Rev. W. C. McCune, a member of this body, has for years past preached and published, by book and pamphlet, and articles in the religious and secular press, certain principles antagonistic to the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church; and,

"Whereas, It is well known that for the avowed purpose of carrying these principles into practical effect, Mr. McCune has been instrumental in promoting the organization of a new church within the bounds of this Presbytery, out of undismitted members, and upon the foundation of these principles, and has been re-examined by an irresponsible Council, accepted a call to become the pastor of the new church, and has been installed, as such, by this Council, all without leave of his Presbytery; and,

“Whereas, The newly organized Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church is one of a series of independent churches, associated on a common basis, confessedly “to re-organize the New Testament Church,” and to maintain, among other things, the “essential sinfulness” of existing Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations, as such; and, also, to maintain the non-enforcement of denominational law, and of non-subscription, by the ministry, to denominational creeds; and,

“Whereas, Mr. McCune has joined himself to this new independent association, being chairman of one of its conventions, and all without dismission from his Presbytery; therefore,

“Resolved, That this Presbytery rejects the principles of Mr. McCune, as contrary to the established principles of the Presbyterian Church, as to doctrine and order; and that the course pursued by Mr. McCune in promoting the organization of the M. and M. L. Church to propagate these principles, and to receive and send out ministers of the Gospel; his accepting a call to become the pastor of the new church, and so joining himself to this new movement, all without application to, leave of, or dismission from his Presbytery, is unprecedented in the history of the Presbyterian body, is in contravention of its organic law, and is inconsistent with membership in this Presbytery.”

The paper was duly seconded; upon which I rose to speak to the subject matter involved. Having reached the place marked (*) on page 8, Mr. McCune interrupted my speech, alleging that the Preamble and Resolution were both out of order, as being a personal attack upon himself, and an informal preferring of charges, giving him no opportunity for defense. This point of order was not made by any member of the body when the paper itself was offered and seconded. The moderator decided that Mr. McCune's point was not well taken, and that the Resolution being in order was debatable. Appeal was taken, and the chair was not sustained. It was evident that the effort was to throw my speech out of the Presbytery. It was also stated that members of the Presbytery did not “well know” what was recited in the paper. To meet this scruple I changed the Preamble and Resolution, inserting the words, “it is reported” instead of “it is well known,” and moved the following form, which was seconded:

“Whereas, It is reported that the Rev. W. C. McCune, a member of this body, has for years past preached and published by book and pamphlets and articles in the religious and secular press, certain principles antagonistic to the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church; and,

“Whereas, It is reported, that for the avowed purpose of carrying these principles into practical effect, Mr. McCune has been instrumen-

tal in promoting the organization of a new church within the bounds of this Presbytery, out of undismitted members, and upon the foundation of these principles, and has been re-examined by an irresponsible Council, accepted a call to become the pastor of the new church, and has been installed as such by this Council, all without leave of his Presbytery; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to inquire into the facts of the case, and report to the Presbytery what action, if any, is necessary in the premises.”

No point of order was raised until I had proceeded again in my speech to the line marked (†) on page 9, when I was again interrupted, and again the point of order was raised, and the Preamble ruled out. All that was left was the Resolution for a committee of inquiry. Under this it was contended that I had no right to speak to the merits of the case, the Preamble having been turned out of doors, and nothing left for the “case” and the “premises” in the Resolution to refer to! At this juncture, Dr. Montfort introduced an *amendment* (!) to the effect, that a committee of conference have a *personal interview* (!) with Mr. McCune, and report at the *fall meeting*!! To this I objected, because it did not include an examination into the facts of the case. Dr. Morris suggested that Dr. Montfort’s Resolution was insufficient, whereupon it was so amended as to include an examination into the facts, and a committee was appointed to report *next fall*, on a matter which required prompt and immediate action; especially as Mr. McCune had just been enrolled as “Pastor” on the minutes of the General Assembly, thereby acknowledging the validity of his installation by an irresponsible Council.

Thus was I twice put down, and my Preamble and Resolution and Speech turned out of the house. I conceive this to be altogether wrong. As a free Presbyter, under the banner of our Constitution, I claim to have the right, under the Episcopal power of the Presbytery, to introduce a Preamble and Resolution reciting the points in which the faith and order of my church have been publicly assailed, and in the open discussion of which, through the press, leading members of this Presbytery have taken a part. And this, I claim, whether the Resolution may have been adopted or not. If the faith and polity of the church may be publicly assailed, outside the Presbytery, by long articles in the newspapers, I certainly have the right, upon the floor of the Presbytery, to call attention to the fact, recite the grounds and reasons for my motion, and defend the same, holding myself personally responsible for whatsoever I might utter. The objection that a com-

mittee of inquiry will report amounts to nothing, for the committee may report that no action is necessary in the case.

Besides, every member of a deliberative body has a right guaranteed to him, by written parliamentary law, to speak to the merits of every Resolution that is debatable; and every Resolution is debatable that is in order; and this Resolution was declared out of order, simply on the ground that it entered into the merits of the case on which the committee was to report; a position wholly indefensible, because parliamentary law can not be set aside under cover of a point of order; nor can the Episcopal power of the Presbytery, as above stated, be set aside by its judicial power.

Aware that wrong motives have been imputed to me, I publish what I had to say in Presbytery, and which Presbytery would not hear. Mr. McCune thus speaks in the *Cincinnati Commercial* of Feb. 15, 1876—"Dr. Skiuner, without any earthly provocation, has made a determined assault upon my ministerial reputation, and inasmuch as I am advocating no sentiments now that I have not openly proclaimed for ten years, the evidence is conclusive that his attack upon me is a mere pretext in order to damage the present Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly. And then, when his real object and his sophistries and misquotations are exposed, he begins to whine about gross personalities." I think my speech will show how utterly unfounded is this unworthy view of Mr. McCune, and how nothing but an earnest desire to defend the time honored principles of my church has prompted me to the course I have taken.

The defeat of the exercise of the Episcopal power of the church, by confounding a constitutional right with a mere deliberative point of order, so wrenching from church courts one of their chiefest functions, and, in times of trouble, either flooding the church with a stream of formal forensic prosecutions, or compelling faithful men to sit silent, while a counter stream of corruption advances unchecked, has a history not soon to be forgotten. It is enough here simply to note, that from the very beginning of the Presbyterian Church until the year 1822, this Episcopal power was not only undisputed, but constantly exercised by all the church courts, Presbyteries, Synods and Assemblies, and preeminently in our Supreme Court in the years 1758, 1762, 1763, 1798, 1806, 1810, 1830, 1835, and 1837. (Baird's Digest, pp. 621, 626, 632, 642, 647, 649, 652, 662, 664, 665, (89, 2). The attempt first to "evade" it in 1822, then to "deny" it in the memorable 1834, led to troubles which have required forty years to heal them. Enough to say, that the Presbyteries of the *Undivided Church* affirmed by their delegates in the Assemblies of 1835 and 1837 the importance and constitutionality

of this Episcopal power, and so firmly had it become established, after a short but sharp contest, that even the minority in 1837 recognized it as just and entered into it. (Baird's Digest, pp, 666, 674, 679, 681, 683, 688, 692, 713, 745, 749, 764, 767.) The root question was simply this, "Is it competent to any Presbytery to take up and examine any printed publication and to pronounce it to be erroneous, or dangerous, if they so found it, without, in the first place, commencing a formal prosecution of the author, even be it known and admitted that the author is a member of its own body."—(Baird's Digest, p. 665). The evasion and denial of this right sundered the Presbyterian Church. It will do so again if persisted in. It is time for Presbyteries to learn that a constitutional right, inscribed in the organic law of the church, and fenced by written parliamentary rule, cannot, with impunity, be swept away under cover of a point of order, suddenly raised by a momentary majority, and pushed through under the plea that the grounds and reasons of action cannot be discussed until either a committee of inquiry report, or a forensic process is begun.

With these explanations, I submit the speech to the attention of the Presbyterian public, in general, and to my ministerial bretheren in particular.

DEFENSE

OF

PRESBYTERIAN DOCTRINE AND ORDER

AGAINST THE

FALSE UNIONISM AND LIBERALISM OF THE TIMES.

MR. MODERATOR AND BRETHREN OF THE PRESBYTERY :

I design to offer some considerations in support of this resolution. Its subject matter is pressed upon us from many sides. The demand urged upon this Presbytery for action of some sort, is both loud and earnest. The "ripple" has become a tidal wave. From the South and from the North, from the East and from the West, we are called upon to bear our testimony, and perform our duty in the premises. As has been remarked, "the most conspicuous church on the Ohio, at this time, is one of the smallest. It is called 'The Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout.'" (*) The wide-spread discussion concerning this movement, as to its nature and aim, the interest taken in it by the press, by individuals, by the church at large, and the *principles* and *practices* involved in it, are such that this Presbytery can not afford to pass it by. From the relations into which I have been brought in connection with this whole matter, I feel it my duty to present it formally before this body. I therefore respectfully submit to my brethren of the Presbytery the following facts and considerations in support of the resolution I offered :

THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED.

I. The Rev. Mr. McCune, being a member of Cincinnati Presbytery, and still under the common ordination vows that bind us all, holds and teaches that the Presbyterian Church, in so far as it is a distinctive denomination, framed by denominational law to maintain

* Here, I was arrested, the first time, and Preamble, Revolution, and Speech, ruled out. (See Introduction, p. 4.) T. H. S.

its distinctive and peculiar "doctrines, ordinances and church polity," has no scriptural "right to exist." (†) And this he does, first, by a general and sweeping condemnation of all existing evangelical denominations, *as such*, and second, by a condemnation, in particular, of the Presbyterian denomination, *as such*.

1. In general, he holds and teaches publicly that "existing denominational divisions," and "the organization of different denominations," limiting universal organic unity, by the principle of particular exclusion of ministers not subscribing to particular denominational creeds, are without warrant from either "Christ" or "His inspired Apostles," and are, therefore, "unscriptural," "anti-scriptural," opposed to the "precept" of Christ, "sectarian," "essentially sinful," "a manifest reproach of the cause of Christ," "a lasting excuse for the irreligious, careless, and worldly," an "enforcing" of creeds which "require their members to receive as truth, and perform as duty, what is no part of the common faith," "bewildering sincere inquirers," an "advantage to Popery and Infidelity," "directly contrary to Scripture," "hindering the conversion of the world," and a "usurpation of Christ's prerogative." All this is predicated, not merely of "supernumary churches" multiplied in small localities, nor merely of the imperfections of denominations, but of denominational divisions, *as such*, *i. e.*, of the separate organization of the visible Church of Christ into distinctive denominational parts. His language is, "*we shall aim to show the anti-scriptural, wasteful, enfeebling nature of existing denominational divisions, and persuade Christians eventually to organize instead but one church in one place.*"—(The Christian Unity, editorial, Nov. 8, 1873). And again, "*The Lord Jesus Christ has left on record no provision in the New Testament for the organization of different denominations.*"—(Declaration, p. 3.) And again, "*Inspired Apostles never organized different denominations in any community.*"—(Hid. p. 3). And again, "*God in his providence urgently calls upon all of Christ's disciples to make immediate prayerful preparation for the united New Testament organization of the church in every place.*"—(Editorial, Nov. 3, 1873.) See also Prospectus, pages 1, 2, 3.)

2. In particular. He holds and teaches publicly that the Presbyterian Church, being a distinctive organization, or "sect," as he calls it, built on denominational law, and limited in ministerial fellowship by virtue of that law, is an organization, in so far as it is separate and distinct from others in its peculiar doctrine and polity, justly obnoxious to the whole catalogue of criticisms above named, and therefore having

† Here, I was arrested, the second time, and Preamble and Speech, ruled out. (See Introduction, p. 5.) T. H. S.

no scriptural right to exist as such. It is included, manifestly, among the others whose denominationalism is so forcibly condemned. Notwithstanding its common Christianity, which he admits to be the common substance of all evangelical churches, yet, in so far as it is a peculiar denomination built for the maintenance of what is peculiar and distinctive in Presbyterianism, as such, it also is anti-scriptural, sectarian, essentially sinful, a manifest reproach to the cause of Christ, and everything else of this character already quoted, and applied to all denominations in general. Upon a false interpretation of the expression, "Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God," Rom. 15: 7 a *dictum probans*, indeed, for open communion, enjoining also the fellowship of Jews and Gentiles in the one church of Christ, and introduced by the Apostle as the practical conclusion of a discussion on things *purely indifferent*, but having no reference to ecclesiastical courts or public teachers, upon this he erects what he calls, in his work on Organic Union, "*the Divine law of organization*;" (Organic Union p. 123,) a law which, (Declaration, p. 4.) is emphasised as a "precept" that "*requires*" the admission of every minister of Christ, of whatever denomination, into any Presbytery or church court in the world, where he may choose to apply for admission. This precept, he says, "applies in the case of *ministers* as well as in the case of members, and no one who gives scriptural evidence that he is a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ should be excluded from membership in any *Presbytery*, Conference, etc., *by any denominational law*." That is, he holds that this passage necessitates the destruction of existing denominations, as such, and the amalgamation of all into external ecclesiastical uniformity. Toleration in the same body of all denominational differences, free unhindered proclamation of the same, inclusion of Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, and Congregational ministers, in the same ecclesiastical court, backed by the right of private judgment and guarantee of free speech, and sheltered by Christian forbearance, this, he says, is the meaning of Rom. 15: 7, and is, what he calls, "*the Divine law of organization*" for the Church of Christ, in all ages. More explicitly, he asserts that no denomination has any right to exist as a "distinct organization," if not founded on this alleged "Divine law of organization." I quote his words, "ten years" old: "A denomination has *no right to exist* as a distinct organization, unless she is organized *according to the Divine law of organization*." (Organic Union, p. 123) What this law of organization is, we have already seen and quoted from the Declaration p. 4. It is nothing more or less than *non-exclusion*, *i. e.* it is Mr. McCune's interpretation of Rom. 15: 7, as applied

to ecclesiastical courts and public teachers in their relation to the preservation of the truth of God. In brief, Mr. McCune makes non-exclusion from ecclesiastical courts and pulpits one of the necessary marks of a true scriptural organization, and of the true church. This is a novelty indeed. Each evangelical denomination *must* receive the ministers of every other similar denomination, with all their antagonisms, and so destroy the distinctive character of all denominational law. Any evangelical minister, no matter how opposed to Presbyterian faith and order, has a perfect right to be a pastor in any Presbyterian pulpit, and a standing member of any Presbyterian court in the land.

But now, according to Mr. McCune, the Presbyterian Church is *not* a Union church of this stamp, but insists upon her denominational law, not receiving to her ecclesiastical courts those who can not sincerely approve and subscribe the Westminster standards. She requires, therefore, *more* than Mr. McCune's "Divine law of organization" demands, and by consequence, in the very language of Mr. McCune, "has *no right to exist* as a distinct organization," because not "*organized according to the divine law of organization.*" "I do not believe," says Mr. McCune, "that the Presbyterian Churches *are* Christian Union organizations; I believe they *ought* to be; I believe that *any* minister, on application, should be received as a member of the Presbytery and who gives to Presbytery satisfactory scriptural evidence that Christ has received him as His minister. *The Presbyterian Church requires more than this,*" (Commercial, February 9, 1876.) Therefore he objects. The conclusion is simply irresistible that, according to Mr. McCune's convictions, the Presbyterian denomination, as a denomination, built on its distinctive constitution, and fortified by its distinctive denominational law, "*has no right to exist.*" "Denominationalism," he tells us, is "sectarianism;" because a "sect" is an organization that "excludes" any *one* Christian minister while a "not sect" is the church that "includes" every Christian minister. "Sectarianism," says Mr. McCune, "is a hurtful excrescence. I am opposed to denominationalism, or to use a more expressive term, I am utterly opposed to all sectarianism, and I am just as much opposed to Presbyterian sectarianism as to any other. I am opposed to the division of the church into denominations." (Commercial, Feb. 9, 1876). The Presbyterian Church, therefore, being a "denomination," built upon denominational law, with denominational standards, carries upon her face, and in her body, "a hurtful excrescence," in so far forth as she is distinctively Presbyterian. She has a right to exist as a Christian Union Church, if she will, without the peculiarities of her organic constitution, but no right to exist with them, for she thus becomes "anti-scriptural," "essentially

sinful," a "manifest reproach to the cause of Christ" and "a usurper of Christ's prerogative." The essence of her crime is that "she enforces" her "peculiarities, contrary to conscience, as a matter of sectarian law." (Gazette, January 11, 1876). What adds importance to these views, is the fact that Mr. McCune, in his reply of November 15, 1873, to Dr. Montfort's strictures in the Herald and Presbyter, affirms that his (Mr. McCune's) views "are not peculiar," as charged, but are "*the same views on this subject which are held by a large number of the members of Dr. Montfort's own Presbytery, including some of its most influential members.*" (Christian Unity, November 15, 1873, p. 4,) views which he says, he proclaimed for "ten years" and the "liberty" to teach which he "enjoyed unquestioned until Dr. Skinner made," what he calls, "his attack." (Commercial, February 9, 1876). These views Mr. McCune holds to be just as important as the salvation of souls. Speaking of himself in this book on "Organic Union," he says, "the writer of these pages can never consent to preach the gospel in any denomination upon condition that he shall not advocate *certain principles* which he believes in his heart are the truths of the gospel. He believes that the great principles upon which the Organic Union of the church must be consummated are just as important as the *salvation of precious souls.*" (Organic Union p. 150).

For the sake of these he seeks a destruction of Presbyterian denominational law by a revision of the Presbyterian standards, or a new Book. Justifying his position, he says, "I regard the Presbyterian Church with no popish veneration, I do not consider her standards infallible. I deem it lawful to propose *revision*, &c. I regard it perfectly ruleable to propose *changes in her standards* in the interest of Christian Union, to memorialize the General Assembly to this end, and to seek to imbue the whole denomination with the doctrines of the New Testament on the subject of Christian Union. I am in favor of a plain explicit creed, that shall be unmistakably evangelical as a condition of ministerial fellowship." (Gazette January 11, 1876). What this means, every Presbyterian will understand in the light of the quotations already made. It simply means the destruction of the distinctive constitutional principles of the Presbyterian Church. It aims at no less than the abolition of the peculiarities of her creed, government and discipline, the overthrow of her polity, for the sake of Pan-Union, before which even Pan-Presbyterianism must fade away. It means the repeal of her denominational law, requiring subscription to the Westminster standards as a term of ecclesiastical fellowship; it means no right to "enforce" her distinctive creed; it means an ecclesiastical court without check or controlment of its members; it

means a protest against the administration of Presbyterian discipline and law; it means the proscription of any creed beyond a mere minimum statement of a few common truths which nearly every heretic might accept, and which it is impossible to dispute without denying the very existence of Christianity; it means that the church has no right to increase her creed by any brief statement framed to meet and transfix any overshadowing error, that may arise to threaten her faith. "No true Protestant," says Mr. McCune, "needs to be convinced of the *falsity of every argument* which is framed to prove that it has become necessary to enlarge the creed of the Primitive Church." (Org. Un., p. 47). In short, it means that the Presbyterian Church has no right to enact or enforce any terms of fellowship, that would exclude from her pale any Christian Minister who believes it to be his duty to suppress, drop off, or fight against the distinctive differences of her confession and government.

THE PRACTICES INVOLVED.

II. And now, Mr. McCune, being still a member of Cincinnati Presbytery, and not merely for "local convenience," as some suppose, but for the avowed "purpose" (Declaration p. 5) of carrying into practical effect the foregoing principles, has been instrumental in "permanently" organizing, as a standing protest against the "essential sinfulness" of the Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations as such, a new Non-Presbyterian, Non-Congregational, and anti-denominational society at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, in the bosom of Cincinnati Presbytery.

This organization was effected on November 7th, 8th, 10th and 24th, 1875, in violation of the organic law of the Presbyterian Church, in the following particulars, to-wit:

1. By "mutually concurring" with certain persons to promote and form the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Society, prepare and publish to the world its creed, basis, preliminary statements, declaration and regulations of expediency, by giving his presence and counsel at the dates of organization above mentioned, and by "desiring that such organization might be effected." (Phil. Presbyterian, Feb. 26, 1876).

2. By recognizing as members of the new church, members of five different evangelical denominations still undismissed, and in covenant with their respective churches.

3. By dropping off the Constitutional titles, "elders" and "deacons," and countenancing the appointment of mere unordained committeemen, complimented with the title of "overseers," to exercise

spiritual jurisdiction in the so called church, and for deacons "certain other brethren" having a "treasurer."

4. By substituting for the Westminster standards the general creed of the World's Evangelical Alliance, laying down a new "basis of fellowship" in reference to the reception of ministers, adopting certain "regulations of expediency" in place of the Westminster form of government, and announcing in a "Declaration" the principles on which the new society is founded and which it is intended to maintain. Every thing distinctively Presbyterian has been thrown overboard.

5. By formally accepting a call to become the Pastor of the new society without the leave of his Presbytery.

6. By adopting a new distinctive title, "the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout," and claiming it to be in its organization and principles after the pattern of the Apostolic Church.

7. By convoking December 10, 1875, through his instrumentality, an irresponsible council of ministers of different denominations, undelimited by any evangelical churches, to convene on December 15, 1875, in order to re-examine him in Theology, but not in church government, and install him as pastor over the new society of his own creation, without leave of his Presbytery, and thus secure a public recognition of the new society as a scripturally organized church of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Basis" *passim*: Account of council in *Gazette*, December 18, 1875. *Herald and Presbyter*, January 5, 1876. *Gazette*, January 10, 12 and 14, and February 7, 8 and 10, 1876. Invitation to council December 10, 1875.

What adds to the gravity of this procedure, is the fact that not only in its inception, nature and aim, is it a violation of the principles of our government and discipline, and of the decisions of our supreme tribunal, but that it was a premeditated plan, and has been encouraged and countenanced by members of Cincinnati Presbytery, some of whom even sat in the council and sympathized with the movement. There is evidence to show that many people of L. and Mt. L. refused to join in the heterogeneous mixture—evidence to prove that Mr. McCune and others "mutually concurred" to work up just such an abnormal institution a year before it was begun. There is most decisive evidence to show that it was not a "provisional" but a "permanent" organization, the latter word having been substituted for the former by the council at Mr. McCune's request. There is proof that the organization was a standing protest against the right of evangelical denominations, as such, to exist. It was the fruit of the anti-denominational convention of Suffolk, Va., May 1875, of which Mr. McCune was Chairman, and previously of the Cincinnati Convention, October,

1874, and it was framed upon the "Basis" there adopted in the address to all Christian ministers and churches in North America, the topmost signature to which is that of Mr. McCune himself.

What adds still further importance to this new movement is the fact that it has been openly palliated by the *Herald and Presbyterian*. Dr. Monfort, (H. and P., January 5, 1876) patronizes the new departure of Mr. McCune, saying pacifyingly: "*In all this there is not much cause for alarm!*" and adding, "Independent churches are no new things under the sun in this country, even independent Presbyterian churches," as if there ever was any thing under the sun like this new society in this country, or in any other! It is not a "Congregational Church," for it ignores the Westminster confession, which is in force in the Congregational Churches, so that distinctive doctrine is not sacrificed. "It is not an independent Presbyterian church," for it has thrown the standards and the eldership overboard. The L. and Mt. L. church, says Mr. McCune, "is not a Presbyterian church and is not under Presbyterian law at all."—(Commercial Feb. 9, 1876.) It is *sui generis*, and a protest by a Presbyterian minister against his own denomination, and gotten up in violation of the organic law of his church. "*There is no harm,*" says Dr. Monfort, "*in Mr. McCune's taking charge of such a church! Moreover, his peculiar views are not new with him.*"—(H. and P., January 5, 1876). And this, after saying (H. and P., November 6, 1873) that Mr. McCune's views are "very peculiar," and that he "aims at a great change in the churches."

If anything further is needed to show what importance is to be attached to this procedure, and whither we are drifting, it will be enough to quote from the *Campbellite Christian Quarterly Review*, of January, 1876, the following passage, which one might take for the *ipsisima verba* of Mr. McCune himself: "Every effort to build up denominations is a positive and open violation of the law of God, for which there can be no adequate apology, and such effort must finally meet its due reward. * * * * The whole system of denominationalism is wrong. It is a pity that another should ever unite with them. Better that all outside of these should continue outside, etc., entirely independent of these organizations, than they should strengthen the existing divisions. Christ never formed the various denominations, on their various and conflicting creeds. What remains to be done then to obey the law of Jesus, 'Let there be no divisions among you,' is to abandon all sectarian names, and dissolve all sectarian organizations, and to organize as a church of Christ and assume that name."—(pages 104, 110).

COMDEMNATION OF THE PRINCIPLES.

III. But I proceed, now, in the third place, to show that the principles of Mr. McCune are in open contravention of the standards of the Presbyterian Church, and her binding decisions, as to doctrine, government and discipline.

1. As to Mr. McCune's *union* principles, the "system of union," which the Presbyterian Church holds, repudiates his theory. She begins her standards by announcing to the world "*the system of union, and form of government and discipline*" she has adopted, and gives her reasons for the same. In her chapter on "preliminary principles," she recognizes the right of different evangelical denominations to exist as such, and does it upon the broad ground of the rights of conscience, and of private judgement, imperfection of knowledge, room for differences of interpretation, lack of perfect light, and duty at the same time to maintain the peace, unity and purity of the church, and to forbear with each other in charity. The very arguments Mr. McCune takes to prove evangelical denominations unwarranted and essentially sinful, the Presbyterian Church takes to prove their scriptural expediency and propriety, and their moral right to exist. Listen to her words, as she exhibits her "system of union:" 1. "God alone is Lord of the Conscience, etc." 2. "Every Christian Church or Union, or Association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into *its own* communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of government which Christ hath appointed." 3. "There are *truths and forms*, with respect to which men of good character and principles *may differ*," and as to these, "it is the duty of both private Christians and *Societies* to exercise mutual forbearance," and so on. In accordance with this she recognizes as more or less agreeable to the scriptures various orthodox denominations, while maintaining that the Presbyterian Church, wherein it differs distinctly from the doctrine and order of all others, is nearer the full truth of Christ in his revealed word, and nearer the true form of Apostolic organization.—(Form of Gov. Book I, Cap. 1, secs. 1, 2, and 5. Cap. 8, sec. 1. Moore's Digest, pp. 43, 44, 51, 120.) The rights of conscience are not to be sacrificed to mere external Pan-union, nor for the sake of these rights, on the other hand, is the church to be turned into a Babel of conflicting beliefs, or a common pool of indifference to all belief.

2. *The denominational law* of the Presbyterian Church is directly opposed to Mr. McCune's so called "Divine law of organization." It puts truth before union, and not union before truth; conscience before

indifference, and not indifference before conscience. It does not confound, as some do, the doctrine of the "communion of saints" with external organization. The Presbyterian Church, while holding to the first, still insists upon her denominational law, and properly excludes from official trust within her pale all who are conscientiously opposed to her distinctive faith and order, which she as conscientiously believes is the nearest and the best expression of the Truth of God. Therefore does she say: "*Although* we are willing to receive all whom Christ has received to the glory of God, and admit to fellowship in sacred ordinances all such as we have grounds to believe Christ will at last admit to the kingdom of Heaven; *yet* we are undoubtedly obliged to take care that the faith once delivered to the saints be kept pure and uncorrupt among us, and so handed down to our posterity."—(Digest, p. 47). And so does she demand that "no Presbytery shall license or ordain to the work of the ministry any candidate, until, etc.

* * * and he declare his acceptance of the Westminster confession and catechisms, as the confession of his faith, and promise subjection to the Presbyterian plan of government, and the Westminster directory." Solemn vows to this end she imposes on all her ministers, elders, and deacons, which they are required to take.—(Form of Gov. book I, Cap. 13, Sec. 4; Cap. 14, Sec. 7; Cap. 15, Sec. 12.) Ministers who cannot adopt her standards are not to be received.—(Digest, p. 57.) Those who grow tired of her system and join other bodies are to be "stricken from the roll."—(Digest pp. 169, 617). She says her creed and polity are "absolutely requisite to the settled peace of the church, and to the happy and orderly existence of Christian communion," and that "without the aid of the confessions, Christian fellowship can only exist in a very limited degree, and the disorder of the Corinthian Church, condemned by the Apostle, would be realized; *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos.*"—(Digest, p. 54.) She further declares that if her ministers traduce her standards they shall be subjected to that salutary discipline which hath for its object the peace and purity of the church."—(Digest, p. 54.) This is her denominational law, which Mr. McCune would instantly put out of the way, if he could.

To crown all, from the very first, in every period of her history, and in every proposition for union with other bodies, she has held aloft this organic law, as the indispensable condition upon which union could be effected, just because she believed her peculiar standards to be distinctive of the truth of God's word as to faith and order, as no other standards are. They rest in her heart as the latest, ripest, clearest, most precious fruit of the Reformation. A palmary argument it is that the late Reunion between Old and New Schools was after long battle con-

summed on the adoption of her standards, "pure and simple," which Mr. McCune has now thrown overboard from the church of his own creation.

Signal and emphatic is her declaration that "the Confession of Faith *shall continue* to be received and adopted, etc.," and that the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States *shall be approved* as containing the principles and rules of our polity."—(Digest, p. 91), announcing at the same time that neither Antinomianism, nor Arminianism, nor Fatalism, nor Pelagianism in Doctrine, nor Prelacy, in Polity, shall find a place to flourish in her fold; all of which Mr. McCune would allow to enter, and the defense of the teaching of which he would protect in the same court, under his non-excluding "Divine law of organization." The "basis of Reunion," viz, the standards pure and simple, she has solemnly declared to be of "binding force,"—(Dig., p. 96), and raised \$5,000,000, besides uncounted anthems of praise, as a token of gratitude to God for the triumph of her denominational law.—Dig., pp. 45, 51, 54, 96). She "binds" herself irrevocably to old "ancestral Calvinism."—(Dig., p. 85), and, to compose the fears of any who anticipated movements hereafter, for either "revision" or a "new confession," her joint committee reported to the assembly that "neither branch of the church desires *a new Confession of Faith*."—(Dig., p. 73.) Thus did the Reunion, vocal with the conspiring voices of 250 Presbyteries, plant itself upon the enforcement of denominational law, including all who sincerely approved her glorious symbols, and excluding all who could not in conscience and good faith teach and practice her distinctive doctrine and order. And thus did the grand old Presbyterian Church trust herself, with clasped hands, to the truthfulness and fidelity of the men who entered into that solemn compact.

It is this basis and this organic law, recorded as very title-deeds on our statute books, and the enforcement of our distinctive peculiarities, that Mr. McCune's "Divine law of organization" arraigns and denounces as "divisive," "sectarian," and "exclusive," in an odious sense. It is this he throws aside, while still a member of the Presbytery, wrecking both the Eldership and the Standards in his new society for the sake of "committeemen," a minimum creed, and some "regulations of expediency;" and this, too, in the face of the outstanding fact, that at the very time of the Reunion the Reunited Church, of which he was a member, "enforced" her denominational law, and "ordered" that mere ordained committee men, complimented as overseers, and not under vows to her standards, should disappear entirely from her organization within five years, and that no churches

having such unscriptural substitutes for officers should be "received."—(Dig., pp. 63, (2) 92, II (2). And yet, with these facts before him, and in full view of Mr. McCune's contravention of them all, Dr. Monfort says: "*there's not much harm in all this!*" Not much, we admit, if solemn covenants are only a rope of sand!

CONDEMNATION OF THE PRACTICE.

IV. But the practice as well as the principles of Mr. McCune is in contravention of our denominational law. The Presbyterian Church affirms that her ministers have,

1. No right to go and organize a church without her authority; least of all, one designed to be a protest against the validity of her own distinctive existence as a denomination.—[Form Gov. Cap. 10, sec. 8. Dig., pp. 107, 173.

2. No right to accept a call to any church without her permission.—[Form Gov. Cap. 16, Sec. 1, Cap. 15, Sec. 9.

3. No right to be installed as pastor over any church without her permission. [Form Gov., Cap. 16, secs. 3, 4. Dig. pp. 149, 417, 418.

4. No right to drop off, in a church organization, offices and officers "whom Christ has appointed and given" to every church, or fail to ordain such, or substitute therefor unordained committeemen who are not scriptural officers and have no right of jurisdiction in the house of God. [Form Gov., Cap. 3, sec. 2, Cap. 5, Cap. 1, sec. 3. Dig. p. 44, (6) pp. 63, 92, p. 108, (d), Com. of Faith, Cap. 25, sec. 3.

5. No right to displace the Westminster standards and substitute for them another Confession, Form of Government and Discipline. Every minister, elder, and deacon, is under solemn ordination vows to maintain these standards now sealed again by the terms of Reunion. [Form, Gov., Cap. 14, sec. 7, Cap. 15, sec. 12. Dig. p. 44, (8), p. 54, (3, 11,) p. 73, p. 57, (14), p. 91, (3).

6. No right to substitute a new denominational name for any church he may organize while still remaining in his own denomination. [Dig. p. 42, Title, Form, Gov., Cap. 15, sec. 13, (3, 4).

7. No right to form a new church out of undischarged members. [Dig., p. 107.

8. No right to teach that the Presbyterian Church has no scriptural right to exist as a separate denomination. [Form, Gov., Prelim, Principles, Cap. 1 secs. 1, 2, 5, Cap. 15, sec. 12, (3, 4,) Cap. 14, sec. 7, (3, 4).

9. No right to encourage members of Presbyterian Churches, who

desire to form another church, to ignore the customary petition to Presbytery to organize them. [Dig., p. 108, (2).

10. No right to remain in the fellowship of the Presbyterian Church and do any of these things. [Dig., p. 57, (14).

And now, the contravention of every one of the above principles of our denominational law Mr. McCune has carried out steadily, persistently, successively, and publicly claims to have the "tacit consent" of his Presbytery for his new anti-denominational denomination. (Commercial, February 7, 1876.) Thus has he theoretically and practically denied her "right to exist" as a separate distinctive organization. He has substituted another creed for the Westminster standards. He has rejected the ordained eldership, substituting therefor committeemen. Instrumental in organizing a new society and calling a council to recognize it, he has accepted a call to become its pastor, been reexamined and installed, all without leave of his Presbytery, and against advice to the contrary. He has encouraged undischarged *members*, and would encourage, according to the principles of the Suffolk Basis, undischarged *ministers* to join the new society for the propagation of these principles, and yet at the same time retain the old ecclesiastical relations, while working in a new and antagonistic interest. ("Address etc.," p. 19, Declaration.) He has adopted a new name for his new society, claiming that it is after the pattern of the Apostolic Church. He has made provision for the reception and sending forth of ministers to preach the Gospel, and calls with trumpet note to all the churches of North America to fall in and march with the new movement. He is, by his own act, a member of another ecclesiastical association of independent bodies. There is not one distinctive principle of the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church left uncontravened in the interest of the new society. What avails the excuse that the "Declaration of principles" are not "terms of fellowship," when it is manifest that the society itself originated in those principles, under Mr. McCune's lead, and its purpose is to stand upon and propagate them? (Gazette, January 12, 1876.)

ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS.

V. But in addition to what I have said, bearing upon the duty of this Presbytery to discountenance this organized reaction against her own standards, there are other weighty considerations, prompting us to oppose our faces to the central doctrines, so zealously propagated by Mr. McCune viz., the essential sinfulness of Protestant evangelical denominations, as such, non-subscription to an extended creed, and non-enforcement of denominational law.

REVIVAL OF ROME'S DOCTRINE.

1. They are a Revival in our midst of the Assault of Rome upon the Reformers and Reformed churches, who, seceding from Papal Catholicism and Romish Ecclesiastical Uniformity, built themselves, for the sake of "the Heavenly Truth," as Calvin calls it, upon distinctive denominational law, guarding that truth by distinctive creed statements. According to Rome and Mr. McCune, the churches of Luther and Calvin and Knox, Cranmer and Ridley, had no right to exist as separate denominations. The huge unity of the Papal church is to be balanced now in Christendom by a huger unity of Protestant conglomeration.

We have here an illustration of the old maxim that "extremes meet." The absolutism of Popery and the unfenced liberalism of Independency alike declare that all denominations, as such, except their own, are without right of existence!

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.

2. They are a condemnation of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, who, from the tumult of civil and ecclesiastical rebellion and Papal intrigue, and all the anarchy of Cromwellian times, crowned with the memories of Marston Moor and Naseby, rescued the faith and order of the Church of Christ from ruin:—an assembly which declared, "that the doctrine, worship, and government of the house of God are to be taken from God's word alone," and that "Christ hath appointed a definite Form of Government for His Church, and has not left it to the wisdom and caprice of men;" and so formulated our peerless Confession and Polity, and established that scriptural rule of the church which has become our heir-loom, inheritance, and historic glory. Mr. McCune would be wiser than the Westminster Assembly, in which even Milton said, "Piety, learning and wisdom were housed;"—"composed," said Baxter, "of men of eminent learning, godliness, ability and fidelity," and "than which, since the days of the Apostles, the world has never had one more excellent;"—an assembly, according to the celebrated Judge Hailes, "orthodox, evangelical, and probably since the days of the Apostles, a more learned, judicious, and pious Assembly of Divines never convened."

MARTYR-HISTORY.

3. They are a condemnation of the Martyr-History of the Presbyterian Church. These noble men, of whom the world was not worthy, and whose march from the prison to the scaffold and the stake

were stages in the attainment of Presbyterian faith and order, and whose creeds have come down to us, are hereby reproached as "oppressors of the conscience." In old Grey Friars' church-yard, in Edinburgh, stands a time-soiled tomb-stone, chapped and mouldy, "Sacred to the memory of eighteen thousand Scottish martyrs." In the cemetery of Stirling, a granite monument rises, built by Presbyterian hands, inscribed to the "Rock of Ages," a memorial of what God did for Scotland by martyrs such as young Hamilton, and men like Henderson, Knox, Melville, Gillespie, and the Erskines, the descendants of the martyrs. What would Mr. McCune's ancestors, who were hunted by the brutal Claverhouse and his dragoons, like partridges on the mountains of Scotland;—what would Cameron, who, in the days of persecution, used to go by moonlight and weep over the grave of his friend, and sigh, "O! to be with thee, Ritchie!"—say, to the doctrine that the enforcement of their denominational law, and the maintenance of their Presbyterian creed, and the existence of the Presbyterian denomination, as such, were an "oppression of the conscience," "sinfully sectarian" and a "reproach to the cause of Christ?" What would the Albigenes say? What Coligny and the thirty thousand Huguenots, massacred in the bloody St. Bartholomew carnival, whose bells awoke the vengeance of Heaven and brought down the French Revolution as a judgment from God? What the Waldenses, those

"Slaughtered Saints, whose bones,
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,
E'en them who kept God's truth so pure of old,"

and who with "mother and child" were hurled from the top of the rocks upon the pikes of the "triple tyrant" below because they loved the Presbyterian faith and order? What would the "Never-Surrender Apprentice-Boys of Derry" say? What would all this noble army of the Martyrs say, could they rise from their tombs now, and just take a look at Mt. Lookout, then read the *Herald and Presbyter* to find in it these words, "*there is not much harm in all this!*"

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

4. They are a condemnation of that enduring vigilance by which the principles of civil and religious liberty have been alike secured to Christendom as against despotic power in both Church and State, and by which the rights of man and the truth of God have been preserved pure on earth.

"*Oppression of the conscience,*" forsooth! Who does not know that this is the old cry raised against John Calvin in Geneva, and John

Knox in Scotland, when, with unswerving fidelity, they guarded and fenced, by catechisms, formularies, confessions, and denominational law, the truth and order of God's house so dearly won? Who does not know that the founders of civil and religious liberty have been abused as tyrants and oppressors of the conscience by men whom impartial history has noted on its pages as "Tolerationists," "Libertinists," and "Sectaries;" who larded their assaults with pleas of "Union," "Freedom," "Conscience," because the enforcement of denominational law baffled their efforts to uproot the foundations laid by the "Restorers of paths to dwell in?" The genealogy of civil and religious liberty is traced along the very line of enforcement of denominational law and adherence to the "distinctive" peculiarities of Presbyterian Faith and Order.

The world is indebted to the church for everything noblest and best in her free institutions. Freedom is under perpetual obligations to her. Enforcement of organic law must exist, whether in church, state, or nation; otherwise every thing rushes to ruin in all society. It is the glory of the Calvinistic Church, and not her reproach, that she "enforced" her denominational law in favor of Presbyterian "Doctrine, Order and Worship," giving thereby to the nations their most precious inheritance. "By these," says even Mr. Buckle, "the dying spark of freedom was kindled into a blaze." "To John Knox," says Froude, "England owes a debt for liberty it can not pay." "Calvin's principles," says Henri, "are immortal and immoveable in both Government and Doctrine." "Thousands were debtors to him," says the judicious Hooker, "as touching Divine Knowledge, yet he to none but only to God—a founder of the French Church, incomparably the wisest it ever had since the hour it enjoyed him." "Geneva," says Montesquieu, "is the mother of modern Republics, and should celebrate with festivity the day on which Calvin entered the city," "Calvin," says Bunsen, "spoke for all times and all men;" and in the language of Motley, "Europe owes her political liberty to Calvinism." "The Institutes," says Guizot, "are one of the noblest edifices ever erected by men." Even Bancroft, a New England Unitarian, declares that "Calvin, bowing to no patent of nobility, but that of the elect of God, made Geneva the impregnable fortress of popular liberty;" and adds that the very "first voice" raised for liberty in this land, both civil and religious, "came from Presbyterians," and that "he who will not honor the memory and influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American Liberty." Is it in John Calvin we glory? God forbid; but in God we glory, who gave us John Calvin.

What kind of argument is it that would impeach all this glorious

record as an "oppression of the conscience" through "sectarian law?" Pray who set the conscience free from the commandments and traditions of men and the rigors of despotic power in the church of God and in the State, if not Eldership, Puritans and Presbyterians, by the enforcement of denominational law?

INDIVIDUALISM AND INDIFFERENTISM.

5. The central doctrines of Mr. McCune's position exalt extreme Individualism, Indifferentism, and Subjective Looseness, above obedience to Organic Law and true Christian Unity. If Mr. McCune may use his efforts to organize a new society without leave of his Presbytery, or with leave of it, as a standing protest against the right of his own denomination to exist, *as such*, against the right to enlarge her creed statement in case of necessity, and against the enforcement of the distinctive faith and order of his church upon the conscience and conduct of her official teachers; if he may throw overboard the standards of his church in a new organization, and call upon all "the churches of North America" to rally to his help, every one else may claim the same privilege. Individualism can not deny to the next man its own principle of independent action and self evolution.

Indifferentism can not help suppressing a great part of the revealed word and will of God. The residuum, however dear, will not only be insufficient to save what is distinctive in faith and order, but by very disjunction from it must become corrupted, if not finally fade away from the consciousness and the creed of the church. A thousand heresies, now excluded from Evangelical bodies, will creep back to find a nest in the bosom of individual churches. It is this indifference to the "distinctive" doctrine and order of the Presbyterian Church, and the denial of her right from Christ to "enforce" the teaching of them on her official ministry, except under the reproach of being "divisive and schismatic," that constitutes the ground of our earnest protest. Even the "common faith," reduced of late to a few vague propositions, will be narrowed still more, till scarcely a ray of the "faith once delivered to the saints" is left. "Revision" and "change," or substitution of a New Book, will reopen the sluice gates of uncontrollable contention. Even the "Auburn Declaration," if it could be exalted, as some would have it, into a semi-official gloss upon the standards, would not heal the breach. The habit of disregarding ordination vows will be followed by the habit of disregarding covenant engagements on the part of church members. Conflicting interests will seek to control every dollar of vested funds the church possesses in the interest of an indiscriminate unionism. Bonds of confidence

will be broken and disintegration threaten the church. Religion must suffer, for government and discipline will rest under the ban of non-enforcement. The tower of Babel will be rebuilt, only to be confounded of God.

The whole tendency of this non-enforcement theory goes simply to the contempt of church authority, derived from the crown of Christ. It transmutes official courts into mere voluntary societies. The mass meeting vote, the irresponsible extemporized council, the unorganized society, independency rampant over constitution and law, quiet nullification, tolerated revolution—it is simply the world's communism transferred to the Church of Christ, and piously hallowed with the ointment of the Savior's intercessory prayer. It is the "social compact theory" of Rousseau brought into Israel—a Darwinian development of ecclesiastical Fourierism, or Broad-Churchism, as one minister has well said, under the conceit of "Progress" and the "Spirit of the Age,"—a Philistine mode of carrying the Ark of God on a "*new cart*," Uzzah-like, and not "upon the shoulders of the Levites"—a seeking of God "not after the due order."—(1 Chron., 15, 13). What wonder if Uzzah dies at the Mercy-Seat, even striving to avert the disaster his presumption provoked? or that instead of God's glory being brought to Zion, it should be turned aside to tarry in the house of some faithful Obed—Edom? *All because of the non-enforcement of Israel's denominational law!*

UNITY AND SCHISM.

6. The principles of Mr. McCune rest upon a misconception of the Scriptural ideas of Unity and Schism. They make the "Body" of which the Apostle speaks mean the totality of massed denominations in external organic uniformity; or else, an inorganic atomistic array of undenominational individual churches, ecclesiastically disunited. By self-contradiction, they make unity inconsistent with plurality of organized parts in which the unity dwells, and confound internal "Schism" with external separation of the mass into parts. This is Rome's doctrine precisely. But the "Body" of which the Apostle speaks is the plural unit of all who are spiritually joined to Christ by individual faith, no matter by what name they are called—the mystical "body" into which all believers are baptised by one spirit. Its Unity, for which Christ prayed, and whose prayer has ever been heard throughout all the ages, is a Spiritual Unity, a Unity of faith and love, and in—being in God, and the keeping of his words. "*One as we are!*" "*I am in them, and Thou in Me!*" "*The words I have given them they have kept!*" Its "Com-

munion" is the "Communion of Saints" of every name and clime, unbroken by death, everlasting, and perfectly consistent with plurality of denominations. The "Schisms," or "Divisions," (Schismata, 1 Cor. 1, 10, 11, 18, 19, 12, 25), the Apostles reproves, are the contentions, personal preferences, and oppositions of belief, actually present in the Apostolic Church itself, which Mr. McCune himself confesses was externally one denomination *at the very time it was torn by these very divisions and schisms*; and not the separation of the mass of believers into different denominations. The Schism was "in" the body. Denominational union, even under Apostolic care, did not prevent "Schism in the Body," at that very time externally one. The "Unity," therefore, of which the Apostle speaks, and for which Christ prayed, is, manifestly, in the light of the Scripture record itself, not secured by external denominational oneness, nor is the "Schism" which they deprecated averted in the least thereby. Separation of the mass into parts, where, through want of clearer light, there is room for honest and conscientious difference of judgment, is justified for the sake of peace, upon Paul's great law of expediency, and upon this ground evangelical denominations are vindicated, while the spiritual unity in Christ their head remains unbroken. "Now we see in part and know in part"—and this was the argument of the Reformers. "Let there be no strife between me and thee." "Union" is not "Unity." The one Body of Christ is not an external union of aggregated atoms or individual churches. It is an organic spiritual unity, divided into many members, of which Christ is the head, a tree into many branches, of which Christ is the root, a building into many rooms, of which Christ is the foundation. Atomistic cohesion is not unity. Conglomeration is not unity. Disintegrated independent individualism of churches is neither unity nor organic union. To separate into different rooms the contending scholars of one school is not schism; to put them all into the same room is not unity. Mass all the denominations together, it will not produce the unity Christ prayed for, or Paul preached. Schism is only to be healed by the enlightening and sanctifying grace of Christ in the soul, leading to clearer apprehension of truth, and more perfect faith, love and obedience. And never, "till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,*" will our unity be perfect; nor will the destruction of denominations contribute so much as an iota to this glorious result.

7. Mr. McCune's principles proceed upon false views of Toleration and Creeds. In his work on Organic Union his argument is, that because "soul-destroying" and "damnable heresies" existed in the Apostolic Church, and the church was not denominationally divided on this account, therefore *external* union of all denominations ought to take place now, notwithstanding equally grievous heresies in doctrine and order developed during eighteen hundred years. He affirms that "the Apostles regarded their *brief creed* (!) as a sufficient protection against these perversions," and that the same creed is "sufficient" now;—the creed of "a few fundamental doctrines"—not dreaming that the Apostolic letters to the Roman, Corinthian, Thessalonian, Colossian, Galatian, Ephesian, and other churches, to the whole extent of the epistles, were an extended creed and polemic against the errors of the time. He confounds the simple confession required of unofficial persons when becoming members of the church, with the system of doctrine and order and the doctrines and order of the system the Apostle imposes, *in extenso*, upon all public teachers, and which he commands to be "committed to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." Of the imagined brief creed of the Apostle he says, "it efficiently excluded heresy then, so it will now"—a statement contradicted by every page of history, sacred and profane. (Org. Unity pp. 48, 49.) Hence his doctrine of *toleration*, underlying his non-enforcement principle. The "enlargement of the creed," as he calls it, is "an unblushing assumption of prerogative in the Protestant church." (Org. Unity p. 49.) Hence the throwing overboard of the Westminster standards is a logical necessity, as is also his polemic against the denominational law by which they are "enforced." To one who has read the epistles of Paul, how extravagant the statement that the Apostles had only a "*brief creed*!" Mr. McCune's theory rests upon churchly indifferentism to certain truths deemed relatively of less importance than others—as for instance, predestination than atonement, the doctrine of the sacraments than eternal punishment—and seeks, for union's sake, to reduce what he calls the "few fundamentals" to a very minimum of evangelical belief, simply "assented to" by ministers, but not "enforced" by denominational law. And this *minimum* is emphasized as that whole body of truth known in history as the "common faith." It contracts the necessary articles of the church's faith, which are as well the articles of her peace, to the smallest compass, and expands the spirit of toleration in the opposite direction to include the utmost possible number. Within the limits of

this toleration and creed contraction, Semi-Arianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, Antinomianism, Fatalism, Baptismal Regeneration, Sacramental Grace, Consubstantiation, Independency, Prelacy and Presbyterianism, may all find a place and be alike protected and defended in the same Presbytery or pulpit. They are the *toleranda* of the "Union Christian Church;" a church with ill defined doctrines, lax-coherence, discordant customs, and almost boundless license, a spectacle abhorrent to the mind of Paul and to the Prayer of Christ. It would be difficult for Mr. McCune to show, upon his principle of toleration, why Semi-Arianism has not as much right to be tolerated in the Presbyterian church as Semi-Pelagianism, or Prelacy as Independency, or Consubstantiation and the Papal doctrine. *If not*, then the line between error and truth *can only be drawn by a church creed* so explicit that the creed-statement of the truth will itself refute the opposing error, and the enforcement of denominational law is the only way by which that truth can be preserved. The idea seems to have escaped Mr. McCune's mind, that the *witness-bearing character* of the Church of Christ to the truth of God requires her to *testify in her own language* her own understanding of that truth, as against the false glosses of errorists and sectaries. Hence the propriety of her extended creeds and confessions, as barriers against unsound doctrine.

But where does the Church of Christ find authority to reduce "the faith once delivered to the saints" to a minimum of doctrine and order, and so leave both unprotected? Nowhere! Whence does she derive a right to say that one doctrine is relatively more important than another, when all are of absolute and infinite importance, being the inspired word of God, not one jot or tittle of which shall pass away? Squarely did the Presbyterian Church plant herself against this false toleration theory in her terms of Reunion, when she declared what doctrines she would enforce upon her ministry, even her own confession for all time, and squarely did she shut the gates upon the self-ordained and irresponsible umpires of *toleranda*, when she refused to legalize the vague proposition about "*various modes of stating, explaining, and illustrating*" her doctrines, and bound her ministers to the standards "pure and simple." At bottom, this whole theory of non-enforcement rests upon a revolt against the legitimate power of the church delegated to her by Christ, in her use of the "Keys." But either the Church of Christ is a God-built Society, not by a will of her own, nor founded on human compact, but bearing vice-regal unctions derived from the crown of her Lord, into the exercise of which, for "the heavenly doctrine's sake," her ministry is inducted, and for which she is accountable under the most awful sanctions for faith-

fulness herein—either this, or she is the most blasphemous pretender that ever trod the earth. The toleration that would refuse to bind the “whole counsel of God” by denominational law upon the Christian ministry, or fail to protect it by an adequate creed, is a toleration that would beckon a boundless brood of heresies to come in, sacrifice the warfare of the church to a stagnant peace, and to the phantom of a mere external uniformity. It is a toleration that would make the battle for truth, and the victory of Christ, alike impossible, and strike the name of “Conqueror” from the titles that adorn and blaze in the diadem of our King. What must we think of the principle that the church of Christ may not formulate an article in her creed so long as any “one” Christian minister objects to the same; or if she does, it is an “oppression” of the conscience?—(Org. Vanity, pp. 38, 40, 48.) What must we think of the position, that a creed, formed by the whole church, less one minister’s assent, is a “sectarian creed?” Or that the consciences of all are to be oppressed for the sake of the conscience of one?

CHARACTER LEFT DEFENSELESS.

8. Mr. McCune’s principle of non-enforcement strikes a blow at all the guarantees of protection to personal and official character, secured by denominational law to ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church.

Under the reign of non-enforcement, every member and minister of the Church is left defenseless, and becomes a victim to the capricious will of any prejudiced and concerted majority. Constitution and laws, ordained to protect the rights of individuals and minorities, against the oppression of inexorable lawlessness and arbitrary will, and against the unconstitutional legislation, voice, and decision, of excited majorities deaf to the call of justice, are trampled in the dust, and the tyranny of cliques, rings, conclaves, and coteries, combined for the advancement of their own policies and opinions, is installed upon the prostrate form of every sacred right guaranteed, under solemn covenant, to the humblest member and minister of the Presbyterian Church. Appeal to law is vain. Arbitrary power spurred on by private understandings to defeat the plainest claims of Justice, this is the tyranny that usurps the seat of judgment in every court where the principle of non-enforcement of statute laws obtains. Under its sway the most atrocious slanders may be poured upon the head of the innocent; the darkest conspiracies crowned with success, and injuries irreparable perpetrated with impunity. Name, influence, honor, family, character, and usefulness may be destroyed, and crimes which even the ungodly

would abhor, left not only unpunished, but shielded in the kingdom of Christ. How long will the enforcement of denominational law as to *morals* survive the non-enforcement of denominational law as to *doctrine*? Not an hour! The principle that tolerates for peace and union's sake false doctrine, will tolerate for peace and union's sake a wicked practice; the two go hand in hand, and he is blind as the blindest who cannot see that the influence which palliates non-enforcement of organic law as to *matter of faith*, is the very influence which conspires to destroy the enforcement of law as to *matter of morals*, wrests from the injured his most sacred securities and rights of defense, and shields the guilty at the expense of justice and truth. Universally, where organic law ends, there personal tyranny begins, and the courts of Christ can only become, in their measure, rivals of the Star-Chamber of England, the Inquisition of Spain, or the Vehmische courts of Germany, where the only law was the will of the tyrants who ruled them.

ETHICS AND STRATEGY.

9. The ethics of this new movement are exceptionable, "Decently and in order" all things are to be done according to the Apostle's rule. But, in my judgment, there is a savor of strategy which seems to me neither right, wise, nor commendable in this whole matter.

Were Mr. McCune and his new society both outside of Presbytery, nothing is more clear than that neither could be admitted to our fellowship after the announcements of doctrine both have proposed to the world. Denominational law would not "receive" them. (Dig. pp. 57 (14), 63 (2), 92, II. (2). The Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church is not a Congregational Church, "like that of the church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, or First Congregational Church, Philadelphia," or any other such churches in the land. It has repudiated the Confession of Faith which those churches retain. Knowing well that Presbytery's *permission to organize* such a church from undismitted members received "on profession," with mere committeemen as overseers, could never be obtained, Mr. McCune encourages the organization of it himself without leave of his Presbytery. The palliators of the movement plead "usage" in violation of law, when such usage is not even an "excuse." He preaches a sermon against organizing a Presbyterian Church at Linwood and Mt. Lookout. He draws up for it its new creed, basis, and regulations of expediency. Knowing as well that Presbytery would never recognize it, either as to its organization, principles, or aim, he secures an irresponsible council uncalled by evangelical churches to do this, and to re-examine and install

him also without leave of his Presbytery. That is, he just acts independently *from within* the Presbyterian fold, and according to the "Suffolk Basis," both as to undismitted members and undismitted ministers. Mr. McCune's attitude, therefore, is not that of a Presbyterian minister maintaining the Confession of Faith, and preaching by leave of his Presbytery to a Congregational Church holding the doctrines of the same Confession, but it is that of an ultra Brownist Independent, in revolt against Presbyterian organization, and installed in contravention of the organic law by which he is bound, over a new creation of his own, as a standing protest against the "essential sinfulness" of all existing evangelical denominations, as such, against extended creeds, and against the enforcement of denominational law. (Neal's Puritans, I. 149, 150). Thus is acquired a status for himself and the new movement which could never have been acquired in an orderly manner, and a *quasi* imprimatur of the Presbytery is given to the whole affair, Mr. McCune proclaiming to the public that he has his Presbytery's "tacit consent." Yea, more; Mr. McCune, with an air of nonchalance, declares "any petty question about the formality of first asking leave may interest hair-splitting ecclesiastical lawyers whose vocation it is to tithe mint anise and cummin. If Presbytery says the *thing done is right*, I will be content. If she says I should have first asked leave, *I will plead ignorance and indifference.*" (Presbyterian, Feb. 12, 1876.) Comment on this sentence is unnecessary.

I say the ethics of this whole movement are exceptionable. Remaining under vows to maintain and defend the Presbyterian standards, Mr. McCune throws them overboard in his new organization, denies the right of Presbytery to "enforce" her peculiar tenets as to faith and order, as a term of office, and pleads in this behalf, "conscience" and "union." Conscience, with Mr. McCune, has rights against conscience. The conscience that throws overboard the standards as a "hurtful excrescence" in the new church, has rights against the same conscience that "sincerely approves and adopts" them as good in the old church! He has two different exercises of the same "private judgment" in reference to the same public thing; two different subscriptions, two different Confessions, two different organizations! In the one he is antagonistic to the other, yet he professes to be loyal to both. Is not this "Schism in the body?" "Any minister," says the Suffolk basis, "who has adopted this Basis, but who *does not deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations* shall, at his request, be enrolled *notwithstanding.*" (Address p. 19, Dec. signed by Mr. McCune.) This is the key that solves not only the reception of "undismitted ministers" into the new movement, but also of "undismitted

members" into the new society in contravention of denominational law. I submit that such ethics are not the ethics of the scriptures. And that all this should be done under the shield of the World's Evangelical Alliance creed, which never was meant to be a basis for a particular church organization, is a grievous misrepresentation of the nature and aim of that noble movement. Read the masterly papers of those great and good men, Drs. Hodge, Smith, Bedell, Marston, Conrad, Cook, Muhlenburg, Stoughton, Davis and Noel, representing English, French and American denominations. (Evan. All. Proceedings 1873, pp. 139-197). They all repel both the principles and the practices against which I have here spoken. It is well to remember that the Evangelical Alliance is not a church organization. It is simply a voluntary association of individuals, merely for testimony and cooperation in Christian work.

CAUSES OF TROUBLE.

10. The principles advocated by Mr. McCune, associated, as they are, with opposition to Church creeds, the overthrow of the eldership, the encouragement of an irresponsible ministry, and other measures that bring no good to the church, are nourished by the very same influences which, in days past, have occasioned a world of trouble to the people of God. One of the branches of the divided Church, the first year after the division, when reviewing and deploring the past, and humbling itself before God, on account of its unfaithfulness, traced the causes of the trouble in the Presbyterian Church to three things: I. The lax use of the powers of the Keys, so that discipline was put in abeyance. II. The licentiousness of the religious press, propagating false doctrine. III. The bold and unwarranted interpretation, by ambitious men, of particular passages of the Scripture, in favor of some preconceived theory. "Our great error," it said, "has been a *want of fidelity* to the fundamental principles of our ecclesiastical compact. Many have been allowed publicly to avow opinions subversive of its distinguishing doctrines. Who does not know that as against want of fidelity in church courts there is no remedy but revolution?" Again, "We are convinced that the difficulties in which our beloved Church has been involved have been in no small degree *owing to the periodical press*, and we confidently believe that unless more care be taken to guard against the circulation of unsuitable papers in our churches, the same evils from which we have escaped will again come in upon us, notwithstanding all the efforts of the pulpit to counteract them." And again, "There are few things more alarming than the *bold and unau-*

thorized interpretations put on certain passages of the word of God by serious persons, in order to maintain some favorite principle adopted by them, and which, before they begin their inquiries, they confidently presume can not be contrary to the word of God.”—(Baird’s Digest, pp. 583, 584, 588, 589). When the disorganizers in the radical New Light movement, which, in the beginning of the present century, spread through Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and other States, vexed the church under the cry of liberality and union, progress and reform, their work ended only in division and destruction. Three prime principles promulgated by pamphlets, newspapers, and irresponsible preachers, were the sails of the movement: First, the right of any person, educated or uneducated, authorized or unauthorized, to preach the Gospel: Secondly, non-exclusion from churches and church courts; Thirdly, opposition to church creeds. Against the first our church planted herself upon her time-honored and well-tried ground, saying: “It cannot be reasonably denied, that it is disorderly for any person to preach the word, or to administer the ordinances of the gospel, who is not clothed with ministerial authority.” Against the second, she said: “If we attend to their sentiment in church government and discipline, we will find them no less anti-Scriptural and subversive of all good order in Christ’s Kingdom. Their own declaration is ‘Christians have no power over one another to *cut off* or *exclude*.’” Against the third, she said: “Consider, dear brethren, the pernicious tendency of the present disorganizing plan. Under the specious pretense of honoring the Scriptures, they would persuade you to reject all written or printed creeds and forms of discipline, alleging that those who adopt such substitute them for Divine Inspiration.”—(Baird’s Digest, pp. 638, 639). History repeats itself! What have we in all these quotations but faces of the past answering to faces of the present,—a record of facts and principles which have substantially gathered around the formation of the M. and M. L. Society, and which have been so forcibly condemned by our church, but for the approval of which, Mr. McCune avers, he has the “tacit consent” of his Presbytery. And what is the relation of some of our papers and church courts, under the cry of union and liberality, to these and such like things? If the past is a light, the present an omen, and the signs are so thick in the heavens, and so many acknowledged seers have an “open vision,” it needs no Cassandra, foreboding the future, to point her finger, or sing her prophecy, concerning what is to come!

CONCLUSION.

11. Finally, however much members of the Presbytery may desire to distinguish between the organic union principles, proclaimed by Mr. McCune to the whole church on the one hand, and the many irregular ecclesiastical acts accompanying them on the other, or be willing to act with reference to the latter alone, while ignoring the former, it can not be done. The two are inseparable. The last is the legitimate fruit of the first, animated by the principle of non-enforcement of denominational law. Even had the L. and M. L. Church never existed, Presbytery can not be silent while hearing her ministers teach that the Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations, as such, are "essentially sinful" and a "manifest reproach to the cause of Christ," or that the Presbyterian Church has "no right to exist" because not built upon Mr. McCune's "Divine law of organization," or that she is an "oppressor of the conscience" if enjoining her organic law upon her ministry. Better dissolve this Presbytery at once, and inaugurate the right of Brownism, while sailing under the Westminster standards, than allow this false theory of toleration to go on until we dissolve and die by inches. The organization of the L. and M. L. church is, in itself considered, the smallest part of the great question before us, and derives its importance only from the principles which gave it birth. It is simply the cropping out of the first blade from the dangerous root below. Every principle of Presbyterianism is at stake in this bold and open stand of Mr. McCune, and on this issue. Our system of union, our distinctive tenets of doctrine and polity, our denominational law, the decisions of our supreme court, our ordination vows, the conduct of our members and ministers, our whole ecclesiastical constitution, the confidence of brother in brother, our public example, the peace unity and purity of the church, and the respect due to ourselves, all are at stake.

Mr. Moderator, and brethren of the Presbytery, I have spoken in this day of latitudinarian laxity according to the dictates of my conscience and my vows. I have sought to discharge a duty which I felt incumbent upon me as a Presbyterian minister, loyal to the standards of my church and to the terms of the late reunion. To Mr. McCune and all concerned in this matter who differ from me, I have nothing but the kindest feelings. I have endeavored to substantiate the positions I have taken by genuine quotations, actual history, and reference to the organic law of the church. From many persons, high in distinction in the Presbyterian Church, and of ripe experience, come notes of foreboding and alarm. For myself, I would fain do what in

me lies to forestall any unpropitious result, by meeting in time the tendencies which threaten our peace. I fain would use what ability God has given me, little though it be, to buttress the walls and towers of our Zion; to "enforce" upon the consciences of my brethren the distinctive principles of our faith and order; to urge all to "study the things that make for peace;" to stand firm upon the traditions, precedents, usages, deliverances, and constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and secure the ripe fruit of those fond hopes of the future, our reunion so warmly indulged. With these concluding remarks, I submit to the consideration of the Presbytery what I have spoken in support of my resolution.



REPLY

OF THE

REV. THOMAS H. SKINNER,

TO THE

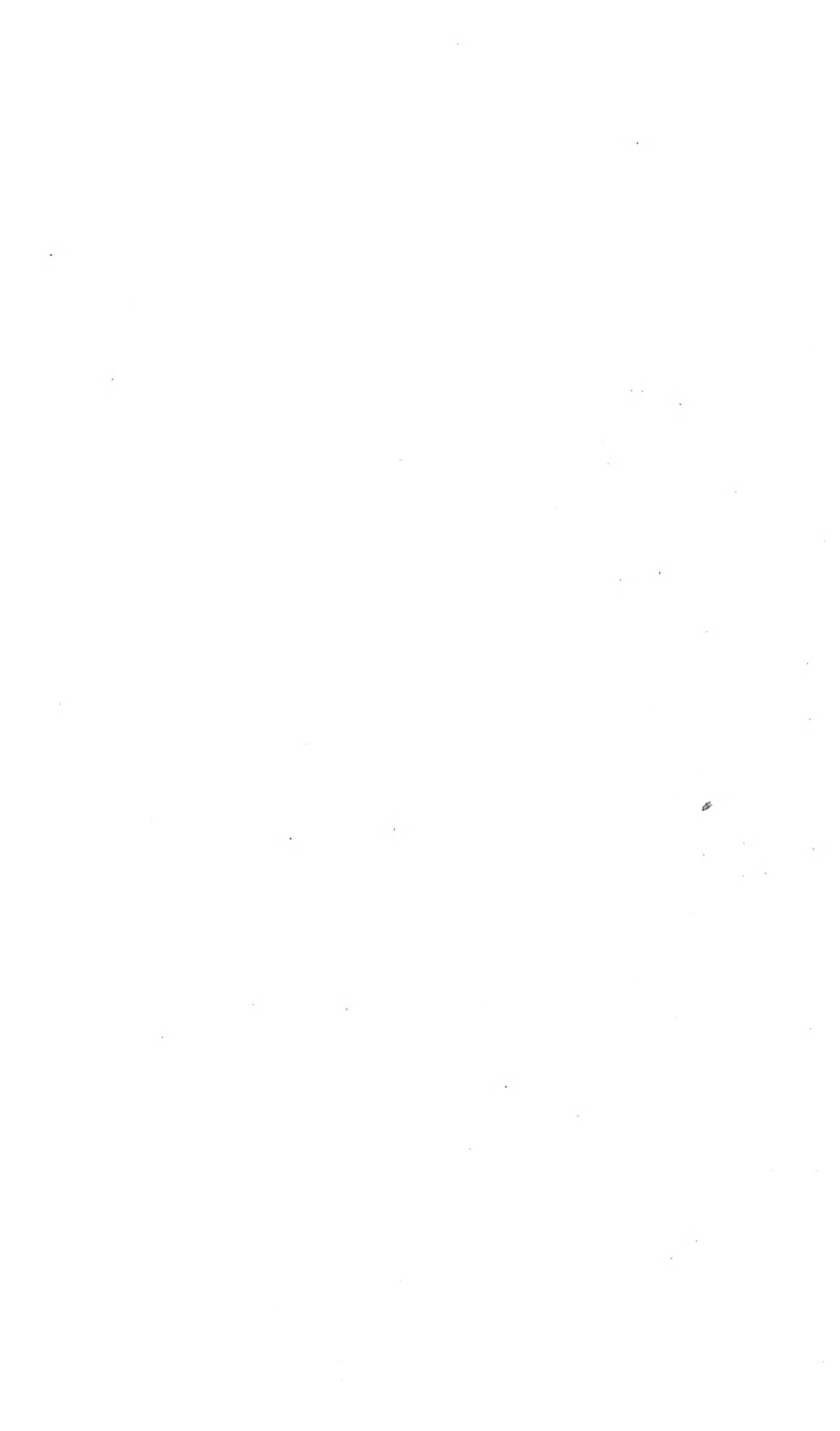
Rev. J. G. MONFORT, D.D.

In his Editorial of May 17, 1876.

CINCINNATI:

GAZETTE CO., PRINTERS, FOURTH AND VINE STREETS,

1876.



REPLY.

REV. J. G. MONFORT, D. D.,

DEAR SIR:—As my reply to your editorial of the 17th inst. has been taken off and delayed, and by your own action prevented from appearing in the issue of your paper immediately succeeding the one in which your editorial was published, I resume my pen to write this answer. If my former article reaches me before this is finished, I shall use such parts of it as I may deem proper.*

With what seems to me a strange impropriety, you have accepted a position as Chairman of the Committee, to report next Fall on Mr. McCune's case, having already given two contrary decisions thereupon. And now, being Chairman, you have, by what seems to me an equally strange impropriety, devised an editorial, compounded of both the above named decisions, while affecting to be ignorant of the "facts" in the case, saying that when you wrote your editorial of Jan. 5, 1876, defending Mr. McCune's course, you gave the facts as you "*supposed them to be*," (!), notwithstanding two opposite and previous editorials of Nov. 8, 1873, and Aug. 18, 1875, when you wrote the facts as they were *known* by you to be, and quoted from Mr. McCune in both instances, in proof of your knowledge of the same. Finally, in your editorial of May 17, 1876, you say "*if* Dr. Skinner is right in his facts, there is much harm in many things, but if the facts are as we stated in the extract above, we still say 'there is not much harm in all this.'" You then add, as if affecting to be ignorant of the facts, "As to what the facts are, we shall soon know." Your present editorial, May 17, 1876, is directed, after these three irreconcilable attitudes of *pro*, *anti*, and *neutrum*, *yes*, *no*, and *neither*, plus a petition for "suspense" of public judgement, to a ustification of yourself chiefly, of the Presbytery subordinately,

* Dr. Monfort has written FOUR special editorials on this subject; one Nov. 8, 1873, another Aug. 18, 1875; BOTH against Mr. McCune; the third Jan. 5, 1876, for Mr. McCune, after the council had met; the fourth May 17, 1876, in suspense, and which I here review. T. H. S.

and to a condemnation of me, making a concluding dash at what you are pleased to call "Dr. Skinner's high sectarian position," thus adopting the favorite expression of Mr. McCune as your own.

In reply, therefore, to your editorial of May 17, 1876, I propose to show, (1), what you well knew as to the facts, better than myself, and which justified your editorials of Nov. 8, 1873, and Aug. 18, 1875, both adverse to Mr. McCune's course, and the answer which Mr. McCune made to you in both cases; and (2), that, knowing these facts, you carefully avoided them in your editorial of Jan. 5, 1876, written to defend the L. and M. L. organizations, Mr. McCune's course, and the course of Messrs. Morris, Morey, and White, who sat in the undelegated and irresponsible Council, to re-examine and install Mr. McCune, without leave of Presbytery, in contravention of Presbyterian law and order; and (3), to consider such other points of the editorial, as time and space permit.

I. You well knew Mr. McCune's views. I briefly quote them:—

(1). *As to denominations in general.* "The Lord Jesus Christ has left on record *no provisions* in the New Testament for the organization of different denominations." "I am *entirely opposed* to the division of the church into denominations." "They are essentially sinful, and a manifest reproach to the cause of Christ."

(2). *As to the divine non-excluding Law of Organization, grounding church order in a text, relating to things purely indifferent,* Receive ye one another, &c., Rom. xv, vii. "This is a precept that applies to *ministers* as well as *members*." "Any Christian minister has a right to membership in any Conference Association or Presbytery in Christendom."

(3). *As to reorganization of the New Testament church.* "God, in his Providence, urgently calls upon all Christ's disciples to make *immediate* prayerful preparation for the New Testament organization of the church, in every place."

(4). *As to extended church creeds.* "The enlargement of the creed is an unblushing *assumption of prerogative*, in the Protestant church."

(5). *As to ordination views.* "The Presbyterian church only asks men at their ordination, what their *present* views are, and

never pledges them not to change their views." "No true Protestant needs be convinced of the *falsity* of every argument that is framed to prove that it has become necessary to enlarge the creeds of the primitive church."

(6.) *As to plurality of Official Membership! How to be anti-denominational, and yet denominational! How to be separate, and yet not separate! How to be a unity, and yet duality!* "Any minister who has adopted this basis, (the new basis), but who does *not* deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations, shall, at his request, be enrolled *notwithstanding*." "All ministers and churches adopting this basis, including all who may not have severed heretofore existing denominational relations, are invited to attend this Convention." (Suffolk, Va., 1875.)

(7.) *As to denominational peculiarities in the reception of ministers.* "We require *no* assent to any denominational peculiarity, as a condition of fellowship."

(8.) *As to the covenant of God with believers, in behalf of their offspring.* "I utterly repudiate the doctrine of infant church membership." "Such a thing may linger among certain High Churchmen."

(9.) *As to a definition of the New Testament church.* "It consists of believers, and believers *only*." "Some would add, and *also* includes the children, but this is *no* part of the common faith."

(10.) *As to Infant Baptism.* "The Presbyterian Church has ceased to enforce Infant Baptism!"

(11.) *As to admitting Unbaptised persons to full Communion.* "I would vote to receive any who can give satisfactory evidence, that he is a true Christian and cheerfully grant him forbearance, as a fellow member in the church, *although* he has the views of the "Friends" concerning Water Baptism."

(12.) *As to the Term of Church Membership, excluding Baptism and pledge of obedience to the church.* "Faith in Christ is the *only* New Testament requirement for Church Membership."

(13.) *As to Roman Catholic Membership.* "I would most certainly admit Roman Catholics as members of my congregation."

Such are the views and principles Mr. McCune has taught, and which Dr. Montfort well knows, and knew when he wrote his editorials. Of these Mr. McCune says, "I am advocating no

sentiments, now that I have not openly proclaimed for *ten years*. I enjoyed unquestioned liberty to teach them until Dr. Skinner made his attack." Dr. Monfort in his editorial of Nov. 8, 1873, takes Mr. McCune to task, saying, Mr. McCune's views are *peculiar in some respects!* Perhaps the following extracts from his first issue may furnish our readers with a *key to his scheme.*" Again, it will be seen that Brother McCune *aims at a great change in the churches.*" "Again; there is a *wide difference* of opinion among evangelical Christians as to what is Christian unity and what is demanded in the matter of organic Christian Union." To this criticism by Dr. Monfort, Mr. McCune replies Nov. 15, 1873, saying, "we think there is *no occasion at all for alarm!*" "*It will not injure the churches at all to conform to the will of Christ in this matter!*" "My views on this subject are the same views which are held by a large number of the members of Dr. Monfort's own Presbytery, including some of the oldest and most influential members!" "The statement that Mr. McCune's views are peculiar in some respects, will, wherever it is believed, create a serious and unjust prejudice, and therefore, we ask the Herald and Presbyter to make *suitable correction!*" Chr. Un., Nov. 15, 1873. I ask, now, in view of these statements whether you knew or did not know the "facts" as to Mr. McCune's views, and whether they are not as I stated in my Preamble, antagonistic to the faith and order of our church? I ask you if the ministers in this region did not know them also?

II. When after temporary suspension, the Christian Unity, reappeared Aug. 1, 1875, with Messrs. Melish, Wellons and McCune as conjunct editors, and while Mr. McCune was actually working up the L. and M. L. organization and *only three months* before it was born, and *only four before* the Council met, you thus spoke again, quoting expressions from Mr. McCune.

(1). "We dont know the meaning of "Organic Christian Unity," a "Home and Place for Worship and Work," "one body as well as one spirit," "organization and co-operation," which are expressions used by these editors *in regard to their project*, unless they are now, or expect to be, a *separate* body from the sects, as they call others," H. and P., Aug. 18, 1875.

(2). Again, you speak with no uncertain tone in condemnation

of Mr. McCune's course. "Mr. McCune is a public minister subject to Presbytery, as yet, which moreover *is an unauthorised body according to his views* announced above; Mr. Melish is a Baptist and a member of a Baptist Church, and Dr. Wellons is connected with a church called Christian. If these bretheren are either *for* organization and association, or are *already* organized and associated, the external bond being the Convention which met in New York, 1873, in Cincinnati, 1874, in Suffolk, Va., 1875, *we are at a loss to understand how Mr. McCune or Mr. Melish can be willing to retain a connection with the Presbyterian or Baptist Church!* We should suppose that each would *pass at once from an old organization that is unauthorized and extra scriptural to a new one on a New Testament Basis!*" H. and P., Aug. 18, 1875. I respectfully ask again, did you know or did you not know the "facts" when you penned this criticism? That you could not be an uninterested spectator is manifest from the reply which Mr. McCune addressed to you on this occasion inviting you also, in turn, to take leave of the Presbytery. "You suggest," says Mr. McCune, "that inasmuch as I am an advocate of Organic Christian Union, there is something *dishonorable*, if not sinful, in my continuance as a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. "*Your columns have contained pleas for a Union with Cumberland Presbyterians, who certainly could not accept the Westminster Confession at all. If the advocacy of Union is an iniquity to be punished by the judges, "we are at a loss to understand," what right you have to be a member of Cincinnati Presbytery! When the Christian Unity first appeared, you declared, you felt a profound interest in "Christian Unity," and you said, "we have given and expect to give, much space to it in our paper." "Now my brother, I propose that my name shall stand on the roll of Presbytery as long as I remain in Cincinnati and vicinity." "You could remedy the matter, so far as you personally are concerned, by asking for yourself a letter of dismissal! The true practical remedy, if your conscience will not allow you to extend ministerial fellowship to me in Presbytery is for you yourself to withdraw! And if you should take no measures in Presbytery to break the fellowship hitherto existing, I shall conclude that you really have no conscience in the matter!"* Christian Unity, Oct., 1875. Again I ask, did you know the "facts,"

when Mr. McCune politely invited you out of your own church, as you had politely invited him out of the same? All this was only six weeks before the L. and M. L. organization!

And now, Mr. McCune persisting in his work, with your own knowledge, and having published and spread broadcast his new creed, basis, preliminary statements, terms of fellowship and regulations of expediency, and I having received from his committeemen an invitation to sit in the extemporised council to re-examine and install Mr. McCune, and recognize his new church, and having been solicited by Dr. Morris to take part in the same, I addressed to Dr. Morris the following friendly interposition and declinature. I deem it proper to insert this in order to "protect" myself now against "erroneous impressions" and "serious animadversions." It is as follows:

CINCINNATI, DEC. 14, 1875.

DEAR BRO. MORRIS—You must act in the matter of the "Union Christian Church" without my concurrence. I wrote to Bro. McCune, declining his invitation to participate in its "recognition," and used these words—"The principles involved in your organization, would, if I understand them, be destructive of the Presbyterian Church, were they successfully and generally carried out. Marching, as I do, under the banner of this church, and sacredly pledged, as I am, to "*study* its peace, unity and purity," I can not reconcile it with my conscience or sense of honor, to put my imprimatur on your course, while you are still a member of the Presbytery. * * Had I thought or felt as you have done on the subject of church polity and creeds, before I acted in the organization of a church within the bonds of the Presbytery, and yet out of its jurisdiction, I would have dissolved my connection with the Presbytery, and so have been released from my vows of fealty and service to the Presbyterian Church." The reading of your letter in no way changes my views. One expression in it suggests the ground on which I have found myself in opposition to some of my brethren on other matters since I have been in Cincinnati. "This is better than * * * * * to involve issues on points not vital." *Obsta principiis* is an old and useful maxim, and if we are to allow and favor departures from the faith and order of our church until "*vital*" points are assailed, our vows and covenants with the church are of little worth. A wide door is thus opened to irregularities and contentions, which is hardly consistent with "*studying*" the "peace, unity and purity" of the body. Bro. McCune is a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, under the same vows with the other members, and if liberty and sanction were given to us all to go and do likewise, the Presbytery would soon be disorganized and destroyed. His whole movement is in direct contravention of Presbyterianism. To join with him in the circumstances, and in the manner proposed, is a very different thing from sitting in a Congregational Council, or serving at the in-

stallation of a minister in a body with whom we hold official fraternal relations. I think your action will impress our church at large very unfavorably. Your position as Moderator of the last Assembly, and Professor of Theology, is such as to call attention to your connection with this enterprise. I was told yesterday, by one who ought to know, that your name would be used in the "Union" organ as a sanction to their whole movement. Four or five of our brethren, whom I casually met, without the least lead on my part in the matter, took precisely the view I do; and I have been congratulated on being with them now, though parted from them on other questions. An outside minister, an elder, and a leading Presbyterian citizen, have expressed similar sentiments. If this experience of a single day is any sign of the feelings that will be aroused when the thing is fully known, I think we will have some discussion in the papers upon the binding character of Presbyterian vows, and of the validity of the Presbyterian organization. The Union Christian Church, at Linwood, &c., is organized, recognized, and a pastor installed by one or more Presbyterian ministers in the bounds of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, "without permission or direction from the Presbytery,"—a church which exists professedly as a standing protest against the Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations. To say that the published principles that accompanied our invitation are "no part of the basis of the church," is of no avail, when the church itself originated in those principles, and its purpose is to stand upon and propagate them. Bro. McCune, notoriously their earnest promulgator and defender, is to be its pastor. But I must not say more. I have given you some of the reasons why I can not unite with you in the services of to-morrow. I have been equally frank with Bro. McCune.

Yours in the love of truth and order,

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

Having informed you of this correspondence, in your own office, I ask you again did you know the "facts?"

The organization out of five different denominations was completed, yourself, myself, and others, in your own office, discussing both the principles of Mr. McCune, the character and aim of the new church, and the points of Presbyterian law that would be violated. These points we all know. (1.) The Eldership was thrown aside, and the Diaconate, for mere committeemen. (2.) Their official titles were thrown aside, (3.) Ordination was thrown aside. (4.) The authority of the Presbytery over Mr. McCune, and his co-presbyters assisting him, was thrown aside. (5.) The Westminster standards were thrown aside. (6.) The Presbyterian name was thrown aside. In *ten* particulars, organic law was violated, notwithstanding brotherly advice to the contrary. See my Pamphlet pp. 19, 20. In the installation sermon preached by

Dr. Morris on the occasion when these things occurred, Dr. Morris used the following language, knowing the "facts" in common with the rest of his brethren. "It may be that the best contribution which we in this preparatory age can make to the grand Millennial Unity that is surely coming will be found in such fellowship as this; in the dropping off of differences wherever we find it practicable, etc." Gazette, December 17, 1875. And so the affair was consummated, Messrs. Morris, Morey, and McCune of the Presbytery of Cincinnati assisting, notwithstanding your two editorials of August 18, 1875, and November 8, 1873. I ask again, did you know the "facts?" Believing you will answer affirmatively and will say that you gave the "facts" in your editorial of January 5, 1876, saying, "*we will first give the facts,*" I now invite your attention to the important circumstance, that like Micaiah son of Imlah, prophet of Samaria, tuning his voice to suit the time, you suddenly sang a contradictory decision, to all the above, and as suddenly awoke a complete defense of Mr. McCune's views and his new movement. Among other things, you say of the whole affair,

(1.) "*In all this there is not much cause for alarm.*" Precisely what Mr. McCune said; "*there is no occasion at all for alarm!*" What cause, then, I ask was there for your editorials against Mr. McCune previous to the organization, in which you charge him with "*peculiar views,*" and aiming at a "*great change in the churches,*" and calling his Presbytery an "*unauthorized body?*"

(2.) You palliate again, saying "Independent churches are no new thing under the sun in this country, even Independent Presbyterian churches *like the church* over which Mr. McCune has been placed!" Why then did you say, that you were "*at a loss to understand*" how Mr. McCune could retain his connexion with the Presbytery, if he was either *for* organization or had *already* organized, and invite him to pass out?

(3.) You say, "the Observer's article professes to find Dr. Morris assisting in the establishment of an undenominational organization, while he *only* accepted an invitation to take part in a council invited by an organized church?" And was this all, in view of the correspondence with Dr. Morris before the council met! Was this all, in view of the "*ten years*" aim of Mr. McCune, and of his position that the Presbytery of Cincinnati was an "unauthorized

body?" You say you knew the "facts," and reprove the Observer's "*lame attempt*" as you call it, to give an account of Mr. McCune's views and course. Was there nothing then after all "*very peculiar*," no "*great change*" after all?

(4.) You say again, "Mr. McCune is regarded by all who know him, as honest and humble. *Moreover his peculiar views are not new to him!*" Why then did you invite him to leave the Presbyterian Church, solely on account of his "peculiar" views and aim, even before the organization?

(5.) You say, "Presbytery do not believe that Mr. McCune has taken charge of L. and M. L. for the purpose of waging a warfare against Presbyterian order, *which he has sworn that he approves!*" And this you say, knowing the facts that in no less than *ten* particulars this very Presbyterian order was put under foot by Mr. McCune assisted by three co-presbyters, and that Mr. McCune regarded his Presbytery as an "*unauthorized body!*" Is not this a defense of the whole affair, the oncoming shadow of which you previously twice condemned?

(6.) You say "there is a *general expectation* that Mr. McCune will not use his present position to agitate his peculiar notions in the way of a crusade against the denominations united in his church. *If he does*, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof!" That is, after Mr. McCune has given bodily form to his peculiar notions as to union and organization and the thing was already done, you say, "if" he shall do such a thing, it will be time to attend to his case. What is this but *suppressio veri*, as the logicians call it? And what has become of the fabled general expectation?" "*We are at a loss to understand*" why you do not invite him to "*pass at once*" from his relations, now that his peculiar views have taken bodily form, when you invited him to do so before such form was assumed?

(7.) You say Mr. McCune is in good standing and his new church has adopted standards which are *more like or less unlike ours than the doctrinal standards of any other evangelical people and the same is true of their mode of organization.*" Huzg be the heavens with black! Thunder does not more astound than such a proposition as this! Let the reader turn to Mr. McCune's peculiar views given above, and to the violations

of Presbyterian law in this whole affair, and then weigh Dr. Monfort's estimate "of more like" and "less unlike!"

Such is the defense you have made for Mr. McCune and his organization and views in your editorial of Jan. 5, 1876, an editorial you reproduced, by quotations, in your paper of May 17, 1876, after omitting all the essential facts in the case, which you knew all the time, and giving only the outward appearance of things, so as to enable you to say "*there is not much harm in all this!*" You resurrect your own carefully prepared and defective statement, from which any mention of the peculiar views and violations of law is studiously eliminated, as testimony in the case, and then say, "these are the facts as we *supposed* them to be," and *they did not furnish much cause for alarm.*" *Supposed* them to be! I have shown that you knew them to be more than what you supposed to be, and the discussions between yourself, myself, and others, in your own editorial rooms, both before and after the organization, are also proof of this. When you wrote the words "*in all this there is not much cause for alarm.*" "*There's not much harm in all this.*" "*There is not much harm in Mr. McCune's taking charge of such a church.*" "*Moreover his peculiar views are not new with him.*"—when you wrote this, you were aware what Mr. McCune's views were and had been for "*ten years,*" and what the violations of Presbyterian law were, in the birth of his new Society. You were aware that Mr. McCune viewed his own Presbytery as an "unauthorized body," that you had warned him to leave the Presbyterian Church, and that he had as politely returned you the compliment. You were aware that he said, if you took no measures to break the fellowship, he should conclude that you really "*had no conscience in the matter.*" You were aware that Mr. McCune's aim was to drop off the distinctive principles of Presbyterianism. In short, you were aware that every line in my preamble was true to the letter, and that all these views and violations of law were common talk throughout the bounds of the Presbytery, and you say in your editorial of May 17, 1876, that "the reports were *not* as described in his (my) Preamble, and the Presbytery was not willing for Dr. S. to declare and discuss his alleged reports in advance of the proposed investigation," and in addition to all this, affect

to be ignorant of the facts, saying, "*We shall soon know what the facts are!*"

Thus have you assumed *three* distinct positions in this whole matter. The first adverse, the second favorable, the third in suspense. The first time knowing the facts and condemning, the second time knowing the facts and avoiding and defending, the third time averring that the knowledge of the facts was mere supposition, and compounding an editorial out of the adverse and favorable decisions already given, while holding yourself ready, as Chairman of the Committee, to give another decision when the time shall come.

I think most persons would prefer the consistent, frank, and manly course of Mr. McCune, even in an indefensible cause, to the double and triple method and policy of *pro*, *anti*, and *neutrum*, adopted in your editorials.

III. *As to some other points in your editorial.*

1. Your present and alleged reason for the non publication of the article I offered you is utterly different from the one and only reason you personally gave me at the time you rejected it. I trust you will observe that the section of the Discipline to which you refer now as a reason for your action then, did not occur to you at that time, and that, moreover, it has no relation to the case. It is quoted from the chapter on "private offences," whereas this was a "*fama clamosa*."

2. In answer to my position as to my constitutional right which was overslaughed by turning it into a point of order, you again carefully omit any allusion to the law of the church, and to the abundant references I have made. You set up a man of straw, then demolish it, by a quotation of purely forensic character inapplicable to the case, and think you have answered my proposition in reference to the general supervisory Episcopal power of the church, which has nothing to do with formally "accused" persons, and which Mr. McCune was not.

3. The paper you say you had "prepared" and "thought of offering," you also thought of *not offering*. It was after my speech, preamble and resolution had been turned out of doors, I asked you if you intended to offer said paper, to which you responded, "I think not;" whereupon I answered, "then I will offer my pa-

per," and made my second attempt to speak, the defeat of which had been already secured by yourself, Dr. Morris, and others. You say you drew your paper in view of the rule of discipline, which provides for a private conference "with an accused person." You are aware that rule had nothing to do with the question, for it is taken from the chapter which pertains to "actual process;" and that the term "*accused*" is a forensic term, and could not relate to Mr. McCune.

4. With an air of authority, you say "we (J. G. Monfort, D.D.) were careful to pledge for our [Presbytery, that disloyalty to our form of our government would not be tolerated." This is generous, and deserves the thanks of that body. The sponsorship was not less remarkable than the fulfilment. Mr. McCune says, notwithstanding such pledge, that he had indoctrinated the presbytery for "*ten years*" in his "*peculiar views*" and that the "*same views*" were held by not a few in his Presbytery. Have you forgotten that Mr. McCune was told by you to step out of his church because of *these views*, or that he regarded his Presbytery as an "*unauthorized body*," and his denomination as "*anti-scriptural*" and "*essentially sinful*," or that he continued to preach, publish, and propagate the same, and finally organized a new enterprise, overriding the entire standards of his church? Are you ignorant of the fact, that at a regular adjourned meeting of the Presbytery, immediately after the organization, I proposed an interlocutory in reference to Mr. McCune's case, and Presbytery could have acted if it had so desired. Are you ignorant that Dr. Morris affirmed that if Presbytery should take any action at its last meeting reflecting on Mr. McCune he would take it as a "personal affront" to himself, and did what he could to prevent action, notwithstanding his amendment to Dr. Monfort's motive for a personal interview with Mr. McCune? Are you ignorant of the fact that notwithstanding your pledge, the Presbytery still tolerated Mr. McCune in face of your two editorials adverse to him, and even yet more, actually enrolled him as a "pastor" at its last meeting, thereby giving sanction to his relation to the L. and M. L. Church, and recognizing the validity of his installation? Of what value, then, are your pledges? What does "*tolerate*" mean, or what does "*disloyalty*" mean? What can they mean in your judgment, except that Mr.

McCune's course has been "right, wise, and commendable" as Dr. Morris alleges, and that "there is not much cause for alarm in all this," as you yourself say—a saying which is only the echo of the words of Mr. McCune," *there is no occasion at all for alarm!*"

(5.) You say that Mr. McCune denies much that Dr. Skinner charges. Certainly. And did he not deny much that you said also, asking you to make "suitable correction." Of what value then is this statement? You say "the committee will spare no pains to get at the facts." Your work will not be very great. My pamphlet and present reply will I trust facilitate your labors. You add that my speech "reflects severely upon the Presbytery and upon several individual members of it." I am sorry for this, but see no way to help it. Has it never occurred to you that your editorial of Aug. 18, 1875, reflects severely upon Mr. McCune, a member of this Presbytery, and, by consequence, upon the Presbytery itself, for its indulgence of Mr. McCune, perhaps not any more severely than you will regard this reply as reflecting on yourself?

In conclusion, I understand that you, with others, have taken umbrage, because my resolution states that Mr. McCune's views and course are "inconsistent with membership in the Presbytery." How indignant, then, must both you and they be, at the recollection of your own editorial of Aug. 18, 1875, when, as Mr. McCune says, you suggested to him that there was something "*dishonorable, if not sinful,*" in his "*continuance as a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati,*" and invited him, with somewhat of a cool and sarcastic tone, to "*pass at once from his old, unauthorized extra-scriptural organization, to a new one on a New Testament basis!!*" Will you kindly permit me to suggest that "*we are at a loss to understand*" how that which is proper for you to do, should be improper for me to imitate? The parable of David and the ewe lamb occurs to us, unbidden but not unwelcome.

I respectfully suggest that it is neither "right, wise nor commendable" for you to hold up, as you do, in your editorial, to which this reply is written, the Organic law of the Presbyterian Church to invidious judgment, by expressing your want of sympathy with, what you call in common with Mr. McCune, Dr. Skinner's *high sectarian* position!" It is not at me you strike,

but at your own church and its constitution, which you and Mr. McCune have both "*sworn that you approve!*" My "position" is simply upon the Organic Law of our denomination. I submit that no editor, nor minister, nor elder, under solemn ordination vows, and no session, presbytery, synod, nor assembly, has any right to disparage, in public or private, the Organic Law of the church as "*high sectarian*," by disparaging the "position" of those who faithfully seek to maintain it.

Yours for truth and order,

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

THE COMPLAINT

OF THE

REV. THOMAS H. SKINNER,

AGAINST THE

Action of Presbytery of Cincinnati,

AT ITS FALL MEETING, 1876,

WITH THE

ARGUMENT.

CINCINNATI:

GAZETTE COMPANY PRINT, FOURTH AND VINE STREETS,

1876.

INTRODUCTION

WITHIN less than a year I have been, three several times, deprived of my constitutional rights as a free Presbyterian under the very banner of the Constitution itself. I have earnestly sought amid disorganizing movements to maintain our standards, and the peace, purity, and unity of the Church, in matters of grave moment to every lover of the truth and order of the Presbyterian Church. A just Complaint having been regularly brought by me before the Synod of Cincinnati, and reported as "in order" by the Judicial Committee, and the Synod having voted to hear the Complaint, it was, without even a reconsideration of the vote, turned out of doors, under the pretense of postponement. I, therefore, present to the attention of my brethren the merits of the specific case upon which I asked the Synod to adjudicate. The imputation, gratuitously and injuriously made by the Preamble to the Resolution of the Synod, whereby my Complaint was practically ejected from the House, abundantly justifies me in publishing the Complaint itself and the Argument I had prepared in its support. Neither of them would the Synod even hear. Whether it touches the case of Mr. McCune, every reader may judge for himself. My brethren will decide whether I had just cause of complaint against the Presbytery and whether the Synod could honorably, as a Court of Christ, excuse itself for refusing the hearing I demanded as my right, at its last meeting. They will judge upon whom rests the responsibility of the causes of complaint to the General Assembly.

It has been truly said by one well versed in our ecclesiastical law, "it may be doubted whether a similar arbitrary unconstitutional proceeding can be found in all ecclesiastical jurisprudence of the Presbyterian Church." The law of our Church, publicly cited, repeated, and urged in the Synod itself, declares that "where there is a *right* to appeal and complain, there is *positive obligation* on the part of the judicatory to receive and issue such appeals and complaints;" and that "where ecclesiastical rights of *individuals* or bodies are concerned

there is no discretion ; all such rights are guarded by the constitution by which every church court is bound," bound not only to "receive" and "issue," but to "seasonably issue," during the very same meeting of the judicatory, to which the complaint or appeal has been made, the case having been reported "in order," and the records and parties being present. Nothing but "an act of God," unforeseen, or one or other of the grounds of postponement specified in our Digest, none of which existed in this case, is held to justify any departure from this constitutional law. No man may be robbed of his constitutional rights by arbitrary power. Even on the supposition that the McCune case had been pending before the lower court, yet this gave no right for the Synod to eject my Complaint from the house. The Synod had prior jurisdiction. Our Digest tells us that when the pending of one case is set up to defeat another, "the case must be the same: There must be the same parties, or at least such as represent the same interests, there must be the same rights asserted, and the same relief prayed for. The identity in these particulars should be such that, if the pending case had already been disposed of, *it could be pleaded in bar*, as a former adjudication of the same matter, between the same parties." And yet, in violation of these clear principles of righteousness, the arbitrary power of the Synod was used in derogation of my vested ecclesiastical rights, and the Synod ejected my Complaint by an indefinite postponement, upon the excuse of a *perhaps*, which neither civil nor ecclesiastical law would tolerate for a moment. Was not this a living and practical illustration of the doctrine, officially set in circulation by order of the Synod in 1870, that "organic enactments, denominational laws, are the apples of discord and wedges of division in the Christian Church," and ought not to be "enforced?" The end sought was gained, just as the ends sought had been gained in the Presbytery. Nothing is left but to complain to the Assembly. The conduct of the Presbytery for six months, the twice taking from me my right and compelling a complaint to Synod, then the repetition by the Synod of the very offense it was bound to rebuke, and the compulsion again of a Complaint to the Assembly, tells its own story and shows where the responsibility rests. I might plead that the Synod's action was either a prejudice in favor of Mr. McCune, or against myself, or both. I leave this for others to determine.

A generation ago, the Presbyterian Church was torn by the very principles and course of action which have agitated our ministry and Churches within the bounds of the Synod of Cincinnati, giving rise to excesses and disorganizing movements for years past, in connection, among other things, with temperance crusades, women's preaching, un-

licensed evangelism, and anti-denominational organic union. These excesses and movements, and the practical destruction of a part of our Presbyterian government, with tendencies antagonistic to the whole of it, I felt myself called upon, with others, in conscience and loyalty to our Church, publicly to oppose.

Therefore, to relieve myself of what I deem an unjust imputation, implied in the resolution passed by the Synod, and to vindicate my own honor, in the character of my Complaint against the Presbytery, to that body, all the more that the Presbytery is now about to enter upon Mr. McCune's case, I publish my own Complaint and Argument for the consideration of all concerned, as also for the information of the Church. I append my protest against the Synod's action, and my Complaint against the Synod to the General Assembly.

T. H. S.

COMPLAINT TO THE SYNOD.

The undersigned respectfully complains to the Synod of Cincinnati against the following action of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, during its sessions at its stated fall meeting, at Mt. Auburn, September 13 to 15, inclusive, and at Cincinnati, October 3 to 5, inclusive, to wit:

I. *In sustaining the decision of the Moderator, whereby my Preamble and Resolutions upon the case of Mr. McCune were ruled as out of order, because they were assumed to be unconstitutional.* The "point of order" (so called) was raised by Dr. Morris, as follows: "That the Preamble and Resolutions just presented by Dr. Skinner can not be considered by this body, on the ground that such consideration would be in violation of the constitutional rights of the Rev. W. C. McCune, and would be a virtual trial of the said Mr. McCune, without due regard to the forms provided for in our constitution." "The Moderator returned to the Chair and announced his decision of the point of order, as follows: 'The point of order is *well taken*, and the Preamble and Resolutions are not in order.' The decision was appealed from, and the Moderator sustained."

My reasons of complaint against this action are:

1. It was a *repudiation by Presbytery* of its *vested constitutional right* (Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8) "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church," apart from judicial process against the author.

2. It was a *violation of parliamentary rule*, in derogation of my constitutional right to introduce said Preamble and Resolutions, and to discuss the merits of the same after they were seconded, and I was entitled to the floor, no matter what their fate might have been on the final vote, after discussion.

3. Said decision of the Moderator, sanctioned and sustained by Presbytery, was an exercise of the most responsible prerogative re-

served to the General Assembly, viz.: that of deciding upon questions of constitutional law, and binding its interpretation on the court as a rule of action.

4. It was turning a constitutional question into a parliamentary rule of order, so inventing a new rule, in derogation of my constitutional and parliamentary rights.

II. *In accepting, and thereby making official documents of, the Special Report and Collaterals of the Committee of Investigation in the case of Mr. McCune, without any action whatever to amend or to rectify statements, judgments, and personalities, therein contained, at variance with righteousness and truth.* The Report accepted, Record, p. 217.

My reasons of complaint against this action are :

1. The Report opens with, and its recommendations rest upon, statements contrary to truth.

2. It steps out of its way to raise a new case, instead of confining itself to the terms of the resolution under which the committee was appointed.

3. It implies a censure upon the undersigned, and recommends the Presbytery to pass a judgment which also implies a censure.

4. Part of the Collaterals indulge in gross personalities against the undersigned, which would not be tolerated a moment in debate, and ought not to be tolerated in an official document.

III. *For adopting an answer to the protest of the undersigned, September 15, 1876, Mt. Auburn, without rectifying its erroneous statements and the false impression it is calculated to make.*

My reasons for complaint against this action are :

1. Said answer does not accurately represent the facts of the case.

2. It represents the undersigned as being out of order and furnishing reasonable ground for the annoyances and unlawful interruptions under which he was forced to retire from the floor of the Presbytery.

3. No withdrawal of the protest, for alteration, on account of misrepresentations in the answer, could make the protest "more agreeable" to the "views" of the undersigned.

This Complaint is respectfully submitted, with the request that it may be prosecuted immediately, according to the discipline of our Church.

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

CINCINNATI, October 14, 1876.

THE ARGUMENT.

Mr. Moderator, this Complaint limits itself, specifically, to two things: (1.) To the denial of my constitutional and parliamentary rights as a Presbyterian, guaranteed to me by the standards of our Church and our accepted rules of parliamentary order. (2.) To the impeachment of my conduct and character as a man and as a minister while in the public defense of these rights, as also in the public defense of our Presbyterian faith and order. It impinges, in no respect, upon the *merits* of the case of the Rev. Mr. McCune, now in judicial process before the Presbytery of Cincinnati. It relates solely to myself and the Presbytery. This Complaint, Mr. Moderator, needs no apology. The utmost effort has been made, by various parties, to try and degrade the great cause of Truth and Order, out of which this Complaint has sprung, to the aspect of a mere personal quarrel. "The Address to all the Churches of North America," by the advocates of anti-denominational organizations; the wide-spread advocacy of the principles involved herein by so-called Christian Church Union journals, to which the names and influence of many Presbyterian ministers are given; the existence and character of a new organization of this kind in the very bosom of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, with its published Declaration and Basis; the multiplied utterances of the press throughout the land, both secular and religious, and the action of the Presbytery itself instituting inquiry into the merits of this movement, are an abundant answer to so gratuitous a conception. I need, therefore, say no more on this point. There are three separate counts in the Complaint I bring before you: (1.) As to my constitutional and parliamentary rights. (2.) As to the acceptance of the Committee's Report and its Collaterals. (3.) As to the adoption of the answer to a protest. I complain, *first*, that my rights have been wrested from me; *second*, that my conduct and character are impeached in accepted and official documents of the Presbytery, contrary to all precedent. Such is my Complaint.

I. The first point of the Complaint is against Presbytery's action "in sustaining the decision of the Moderator, whereby my Preamble and Resolutions upon the case of Mr. McCune were ruled as *out of order*, because they were assumed to be *unconstitutional*." (1.) The first reason in support of this first point is that such action, assuming such unconstitutionality, was "a *repudiation*" by Presbytery of its *vested constitutional right* (Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8) "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity and peace of the Church, apart from judicial process against their author."

I wish it to be distinctly understood by the Synod, that the ground on which the Presbytery's action rested was not the mere *inexpediency* of the application of non-forensic or episcopal power to the condemnation of Mr. McCune's errors and irregularities, but it was the denial that such episcopal power, so to do, did exist by the constitution. If the constitutional power to condemn widely-spread errors, apart from judicial process, had been recognized, no ground would have existed on which to raise a "point of order," or decide any one "out of order" who sought to persuade Presbytery to *exercise* that power, and save a tedious, unnecessary and vexatious litigation. The only question that could have arisen, was, is it "wise, equitable, and for the edification of the Church," to exercise this power, and to this point my Preamble, Resolution, and Argument were directed; *i. e.*, to a discussion of the merits of the case, in view of the Committee's official report, furnishing the "facts" in the case by order of the Presbytery, after five months' investigation. If deemed contrary to the constitution, irregular, unwise, inequitable, and not for edification, after hearing my argument, to *exercise* this power, it was competent to vote down my motion, or lay it on the table; but I assert it was an outrage upon all my rights to shut my mouth, a second time, upon a debatable motion, duly seconded and read, absolutely in order, and on which I had already proceeded to speak. At the Glendale Presbytery, April 13, 1875, the plea of official ignorance was made. The information I came forward to offer was declined. It was said I could not speak on the merits of my Preamble until the "*facts*" were brought in by a Committee. The Committee of Investigation, consuming the summer, reported the "*facts*," September 13, 1875, indorsing Mr. McCune's course at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, and although themselves disapproving *some* of his views, yet recommending no disapproval by the Presbytery, but suggesting process against myself for slander. The report was not adopted, but accepted. It was a discussion of the merits of the case by Mr. McCune and the Committee. I then took the official documents, and sought by a Preamble and Resolution, to have Presbytery disap-

prove both the views and course of Mr. McCune, and forbid their continuance. My mouth was a second time stopped, on the merits of the case, although having the floor, under a debateable motion and perfectly in order. What was accorded to a Committee and to Mr. McCune apart from judicial process, was denied to me. To support what policy, and in whose interest all this was done, I leave others to judge. The refusal to "consider" my Preamble and Resolutions was an oppression. To accomplish this, it was necessary to find some ground on which to raise a "point of order." I announce to the Synod that the very constitution itself was declared unconstitutional, and on that ground I was pronounced out of order, and my rights to discuss the merits of the case, after Mr. McCune had discussed them several hours before Presbytery, and the Committee's report had discussed them, was wrested from me. It is of this injustice I complain, all the more that the Committee itself had intimated to the Presbytery not to have "a judicial trial," and had not even recommended a disapproval of Mr. McCune's "views," and had actually indorsed his "course" at Linwood and Mt. Lookout. It alters not the injustice of the proceeding, that, after much effort to throw this grave matter out of court, and suggest action against myself for the public defense of my rights and the honor of my Church, it was finally considered expedient to institute process against Mr. McCune. The ground on which I was ruled "out of order" was not the inexpediency of exercising the non-judicial power of the Presbytery in condemnation of the errors before us, but the *denial* of that power altogether, and on that ground wresting from me my right of discussion. The reactionary half-recognition of the episcopal power of the Presbytery came later, only in order to furnish a basis for the opinion of its non-applicability to the case in hand, and a justification of judicial process, but not to allow me any right of discussion on the merits of my Preamble and Resolutions. My Complaint, I think, is understood. I shall show that the Presbytery has the very power it repudiated, that I was in order, and that the action of the Presbytery was an oppression, twice repeated.

Has the Presbytery the constitutional power to condemn erroneous opinions and irregularities of practice, which disturb the tranquility of the Church, apart from tedious and extreme forensic process? My conviction is clear that it not only has this right, but it is in duty bound to exercise it for the edification of the body of Christ; and I think I shall be able to justify this conviction, deep-seated and ineradicable as it is, by the best of evidence and sound argument. I shall adduce in support of my first reason the organic law of the Church itself, established precedents, approved, selected, and recorded since the reunion,

in our Digest, for our guide, and by the recognized practice of all courts in their interpretation of constitutional law.

The whole power of jurisdiction and order, vested by Christ in the Church of God on earth, and in every branch and denomination of it wherever found, is of divine right and origin, and is limited alone by the sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is for the edification of His spiritual body and not for destruction. Supervisory and authoritative, it is broad as the inspection and control of the whole Church and adequate to all her wants and necessities. Its exercise is directed to two things, the preservation of the heavenly doctrine in its purity, and the guardianship of the Christian conduct; in other words, to faith and morals. Take these two things away, truth and duty, and neither Form of Government nor Code of Discipline has any value. The written Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, with its system of doctrine and polity, we declare to be "agreeable to the Word of God," and vow to maintain and enforce it as the law of the Church, just because we so believe. Ministerial and declarative alone, and unfettered by human commandments, and neither legislating nor binding by virtue of human authority, nor against the revealed will of God, it is the vice-regal function of the Church, derived from the crown of Him on whose shoulders is the government, who holds the key of David, and who has said, "I give to you the keys of the kingdom. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." It is an awful and solemn trust, and not a "popish usurpation," to be executed in view of our accountability to Christ for the manner in which we defend the heavenly doctrine and the order of the heavenly house.

The most general, or the generic, name of this power is "*Episcopal*." It is the exercise of that *watch* and *control* which are given to those whom Christ has appointed and the Holy Ghost has chosen to be ordained "overseers" (*Episcopoi*. Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2) and "shepherds" in the Church. It is sometimes called "*Paternal*" power, in allusion to 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. Modified as to the method of its exercise, in certain extreme cases, by judicial forms and rules of procedure, it is called "*Judicial*" or "*Forensic*." It is the broadest, most comprehensive, and far-reaching function of government and administration that exists; the most indispensable to the very existence of the Church itself. It is the character of all her action. Deny to the Church of Christ episcopal power, and she is stripped at once of the very means of her self-preservation; her oversight and control are alike wrecked, and not even a shadow is left on which to shape her judicial. But this

is so plain I need not argue it. Enough to say that it is by virtue of this episcopal power alone, apart from judicial forms, the power of supervision or inspection, declarative and authoritative, and put by Christ in ordination and the laying on of hands upon the shoulders of every presbyter-bishop, whether teaching or ruling, and vested in every ministerial court, the Church of Christ executes nearly the whole of her divine commission. By this she preaches the gospel, administers sacraments, admits members and ministers into the Church and dismisses them, examines, licenses, puts, or refuses to put, calls into the hands of her ministers, elects, installs, ordains, translates, and removes both ministers, elders, and deacons. By this she forms and dissolves pastoral relations, organizes, visits, unites or divides, and commands Churches, redresses evils, and does whatever pertains to their welfare. By this she requires candidates to pursue certain studies and report their progress to her courts, and calls upon her ministers to give account of their work in the vineyard of the Lord. By this she erects and convenes her courts, frames rules, and subjects to review and control their records and proceedings. She warns against transgression, by this same power, admonishes, reproves, rebukes, exhorts, entreats, enjoins, defends the faith, directs the conduct, decides cases of conscience, suppresses schismatical controversies, arrests lawless practices against her polity, resolves questions of doctrine and discipline reasonably proposed, condemns erroneous opinions, and bears public testimony against whatever she regards as injurious to the faith and order of God's house, and to good manners, charity, truth, and holiness. And all this simply by preamble and resolution, motion and overture, act, testimony, and deliverance, memorial, recommendation, and injunction;—not by process and verdict. Valid documentary evidence and present undeniable facts, in her own court, have the sanctity and force of a true witness. Moderator, who is it that denies the episcopal power of the Church of Christ? or the episcopal power of every court in it? As well deny that the sun shines in the heavens! Why sir, what kind of power was it the Committee of the Presbytery exercised, in approving the "course" of Mr. McCune, and disapproving his "views" apart from judicial process, and under a Preamble and Resolution of Investigation? What kind of power is it that the editor of the *Herald and Presbyter* exercised? And is any one so forgetful of all consistency as to aver that the Presbytery itself has less power than a mere Committee, the creature of its own appointment, or than the individual editor of a religious newspaper, both using, in full, the name of the author, and affirming a judgment upon the merits of the case? How preposterous to think that in the grave matters that so often engage her

attention in a wicked world, where the adversary ever works to corrupt her faith and destroy her order, the Presbyterian Church is tied, by every considerable transgression, to an extreme forensic process, that may consume a year for its issue, and in the end the remedy prove worse than the disease! What a harvest of practice for the contentious and obstinate, unwilling to be reclaimed by milder means! What a premium on discord! What a plight for the Church of Christ in the hands of him who, abhorring "*judicial*" power and crying for "peace and safety" in the midst of fast coming calamities, denies the "*Episcopal*" power too! Then, what is left but fire and stubble? Moderator, the compass of 1834 will not do for either you or me to steer by in present or coming storms! It is a question if the anchor of Reunion will hold us, for the gale is strong!

But the Church is not so bound. The recognition of this episcopal power is inscribed in the constitution, in express terms. "It belongeth," says our admirable Confession, Chapter XXXI, Section 2, "to Synods and Councils, ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience, to set down rules and directions for the worship of God, and government of His Church, which decrees and determinations, if consistent with the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for the agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in his Word." The same episcopal power is expressed again in our Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8, which recognizes the "power" vested by Christ in the Presbytery, not merely to "issue appeals, from church sessions and references brought before them," nor merely to "judge ministers" by forensic process, but also, and by a discriminating clause, "to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline, seriously and reasonably proposed, to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church, * * and to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under her care." Again, with unmistakable emphasis does our Book of Discipline, Chapter I, Section 5, revolt against the idea that the Church is tied to extreme forensic process in the exercise of her power, when it declares that, "the exercise of discipline in such a manner as to edify the Church, *requires not only much of the spirit of piety, but also much prudence and discretion.* It becomes the rulers of the Church, therefore, to take into view all the circumstances which may give a different character to conduct, and render it more or less offensive; *and which may, of course, require a very different mode of proceeding in similar cases, at different times, for the attainment of the same end.*" What could be more explicit? Again, the same power, apart from

judicial process, is recognized as belonging to our General Assembly. Form of Government, Chapter XII, Section 5: "To the General Assembly also belongs the power of deciding in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline; of *reproving, warning, or bearing testimony against error in doctrine, or immorality in practice, in any Church, Presbytery or Synod*; of suppressing schismatical contentions and disputations," etc., etc. Thus is this episcopal power *common* to all our courts, without exception, for the Presbytery is only a larger session, and the Synod a larger Presbytery, while the Assembly is the crown of all. Will any one say that before error in doctrine and practice, in any member of a Presbytery, can be condemned, or the Presbytery arrest lawless movements and condemn erroneous views of its members, or bear testimony against error rife in the Presbyterian Church, forensic process against their *author* must be commenced and concluded? It is *not* the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. The best interpretation of any organic instrument or statute is the practice of its framers in the generation contemporaneous with and succeeding its adoption, and the best evidence of that practice is the action of the administering courts themselves, and the decrees and determinations of the supreme court of the Church, which have all the force of constitutional law. "*Contemporanea expositio est optima et fortissima in lege*"—contemporaneous exposition is the best and strongest interpretation in law; this is a maxim of acknowledged validity, universal and conclusive. The construction of the constitution by the courts contemporaneous with its enactment is the surest construction, and next to this, the practice of the courts succeeding. Such judicial interpretation obtains the force of constitutional law itself.

I appeal, therefore, to five celebrated cases in our Digest which testify to the practice of the Church from its very beginning in this land, following the practice of its parent source and which remains alike for all future time, notwithstanding the momentary obscurations of 1822 and 1834, which only prepared the way for an intenser brightness. And all the more I do this, again, at this time, inasmuch as it has been wildly asserted in the lower court, that the exceptional decisions of 1822 and 1834 are to-day accepted law by "ninety-nine hundredths of the Reunited Church." I need only advert to them briefly; they are the cases of Harker, Davis, Balch, Craighead and Barnes. All these began with the direct exercise of episcopal power, apart from judicial process; some of them began, continued, and were concluded by that power alone; while others, which beginning with that power and failing by this milder means to secure the peace and purity of the Church, were concluded by forensic adjudication.

1. *Harker*.—Moore's Digest, p. 218; Baird's Digest, p. 604. In conformity with the early practice of the Church, a non-judicial reference was made to the Synod by Presbytery respecting Mr. Harker, who had "imbibed and vented certain erroneous doctrines." "In 1761, Mr. Harker printed and published his views, and Synod appointed a committee to *examine the book*, who reported next year. The Synod proceeded to consider Mr. Harker's principles, *collected from his book by the committee*, which are in substance as follows." After examination, the Synod passed the following judgment, without any judicial process whatever. "The Synod judge that these principles are of a hurtful and dangerous tendency, giving a false view of the covenant of grace. etc., etc., and that they are contrary to the Word of God and our approved standards of doctrine." On the further consideration of the case, the Synod made the following judgment, to wit: "That Mr. Harker has for several years past been dealt with in the tenderest manner, etc., etc., but that instead of succeeding in these attempts, he appeared to be rather confirmed and resolute in propagating his opinions among the people, etc., etc. On the whole, though the exclusion of a member be grievous, yet we judge that the said Mr. Samuel Harker can not be consistently a member of this body, and accordingly declare him disqualified for preaching and exercising his ministry," etc. Such was the case. The fathers of the Church exercised their episcopal power in "condemning erroneous opinions," and finally excluded a contumacious member, apart from judicial process.

2. *Balch*.—Moore's Digest, p. 220; Baird, p. 614. Mr. Balch, in 1797, having imbibed Hopkinsian doctrines, propagated them, causing a schism in the Church, and the erection of a new independent organization. The "creed" of Mr. Balch, gathered by a commission, was referred to the General Assembly, without any judicial process against its author, asking that the author be required to "acknowledge before the Assembly that he was wrong in the publication of his creed, renounce the errors pointed out, engage to teach nothing hereafter of a similiar nature, and that the Moderator admonish him," etc. Mr. Balch acknowledged his errors: "I do fully acknowledge," etc., did "cheerfully renounce them," did "solemnly and sincerely engage," etc., did "cheerfully submit himself to admonition," and was declared "in good standing in the Church." It was an exercise of episcopal power by the fathers of the Church, under the organic law of the Church.

3. *Davis*.—Moore's Digest, p. 222; Baird, p. 634. The Second Presbytery of South Carolina, in the exercise of its episcopal power, "represented" to the Synod that Mr. Davis, belonging to the First Presbytery, was permitted to "pass without censure, though known to

teach erroneous doctrines on some fundamental points." Synod required the Presbytery to "attend to this matter." After various efforts, charges were tabled by the Second Presbytery, and abandoned, Mr. Davis being excused from censure, on the ground of "liberty of opinion." Synod then commenced a "judicial investigation," and, finally, referred the matter to the Assembly. The Synod's action was declared irregular in proceeding to such judicial investigation, when there was "no reference and no appeal," and the next Assembly refused to "reconsider." This action was just, because the Synod was not a court of original jurisdiction over a minister. It, however, considered an "*overture*" from the Synod of the Carolinas, "requesting their attention to a late publication of the Rev. W. C. Davis, denominated the *Gospel Plan*." The finding upon the overture was, that the doctrines of Mr. Davis are "contrary to the Confession of Faith and the Word of God," "of very dangerous tendency," and the "Assembly do judge, and do hereby declare, that the preaching or publishing them ought to subject the person or persons so doing, to be dealt with by their respective Presbyteries according to the discipline of the Church relative to the propagation of errors." Judicial process was commenced in a new Presbytery, to which Mr. Davis was attached, his former Presbytery having been dissolved. Mr. Davis declined jurisdiction and was deposed from the ministry. The fact is patent that by episcopal power the errors and course of Mr. Davis were condemned, upon overture alone, apart from the conduct of a regular judicial trial.

4. *Craighead*.—Moore's Digest, p. 223; Baird, p. 638. Mr. Craighead having preached a Pelagianizing sermon before Synod, in 1806, "the things he uttered before the Synod were immediately submitted to that court by the *Committee of Bills and Overtures*." (Princeton Review, October, 1847, p. 196.) He was admonished on the spot, formally by the Synod, in the exercise of its episcopal power, through the Moderator, to abstain from the propagation of his views. He "set at naught the admonition" of the Synod, determined to keep on in his way, and published the sermon. Judicial process was afterward resorted to. In the course of it, the Assembly said, in 1824, "The Synod might have proceeded instantly to condemn the errors of Mr. Craighead's book, as the Assembly did the "*Gospel Plan*" of W. C. Davis," that is, even without judicial process. (Baird, 642.) It recognized the right to exercise episcopal power, not only in the condemnation of error, but for a "lofty and independent spirit, that would not be controlled by authority," from "a bold and confident controvertist, who sets his opponents at defiance."

5. *Barnes*.—Moore's Digest, p. 226; Baird, p. 650. In 1829, Mr.

Barnes preached the "Way of Salvation," the sermon causing public discussion. Next year the Presbytery of Philadelphia allowed a call from the First Church of Philadelphia to be placed in his hands. A minority protested and complained that the proper consideration of his views was suppressed, and the right of the Presbytery to pronounce upon those views, apart from judicial process, denied. Synod sustained the complaint of the minority, and enjoined Presbytery "to hear and decide on their objections to the orthodoxy of the sermon of Mr. Barnes, and to take such order on the whole subject as is required by a regard to the purity of the Church and its acknowledged doctrines and order." Obedient to this injunction, Presbytery, apart from judicial process, "entered into an examination of Mr. Barnes' sermon, and decided as follows: Presbytery, etc., "are of the opinion that it contains speculations of dangerous tendency," etc. (reciting the points), and, "on the whole, express their deep regret that Mr. Barnes should have preached and published a discourse so highly objectionable," etc., "and earnestly recommend to Mr. Barnes to reconsider and renounce the erroneous matter," etc., and appointed a committee to wait upon Mr. Barnes, and report the result of their interview at the next meeting. Mr. Barnes refused to hear the committee, resisted the exercise of the episcopal power of the Presbytery, pronouncing "the whole proceeding unconstitutional" This was falling back, not on the early practice of the Church, but upon a new interpretation of the constitution given in 1822. The whole matter was now referred directly to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, with the following question, viz.: "Whether, by the constitution, it is competent to any Presbytery to take up and examine any printed publication, and to pronounce it to be erroneous or dangerous, if they so find it, *without in the first place commencing a formal prosecution of the author*, even supposing it to be known and admitted that the author is a member of its own body; or whether a Presbytery, in every such case, *must*, when disposed to act on the same, *forthwith commence a forensic prosecution of the author* of the publication which is believed to contain erroneous and dangerous opinions or doctrines?" Baird, pp. 654, 655. It is the question of episcopal power, as to its extent, raised in 1831, notwithstanding the previous and uniform practice of the Church, save once, in 1822, which was counteracted by the action of 1824.

The following correspondence with one well qualified to judge in the matter presented, I here insert:

CINCINNATI, October 15, 1876.

BRO. BAIRD: Will you be so kind as to give me your opinion in respect to the five cases—Balch, Davis, Harker, Craighead and Barnes—named in the Digest, and state whether they are cases in which the *episcopal power* of the Presbytery, in so far as it may be distinguished from judicial or forensic process, was exercised.

Yours fraternally, etc.,

* * *

CINCINNATI, October 16, 1876.

DEAR BROTHER: By "judicial or forensic process" I understand you to mean, proceedings implying the presence of a prosecutor and defendant and forms, the essential features of which are stated in our book, in the chapter on Actual Process.

Episcopal jurisdiction, as contrasted with this, must mean that authority by which, without an intervening prosecutor, or the forms of actual process, Church courts act immediately and of their own knowledge for the correction of disorders, the reclaiming of wanderers, and the protection of the Church and its doctrines.

Of proceedings of this kind, respecting which you inquire, the records of the Church exhibit a number of memorable examples. Conspicuous among them are the cases of Harker, Balch, Davis, Craighead and Barnes. In each of these cases the episcopal authority was employed in examining and censuring the published opinions of the parties. In the Harker case, the Synod, without any of the forms of actual process, having first censured Harker's book, eventually excluded him from the ministry for contumacy and persistency in error. In the other cases, the episcopal function was exercised in censure of the publications, and its action was followed, more or less directly, by measures of forensic or judicial process.

Two other signal examples of episcopal jurisdiction you will find in the New Light and Cumberland Schisms. In both instances the Synod of Kentucky asserted direct episcopal authority over unsound ministers, citing them to its bar, examining them as to their opinions and conduct, and suspending them from their ministry. And in both cases the General Assembly, after mature inquiry into the whole proceedings, fully approved them.

I could mention other instances, but these may serve you as examples of the whole. In fact, it is, I think, beyond question that in all periods of the history of our Church, from the beginning until a comparatively recent date, the episcopal function was in constant exercise, and its righteousness unquestioned by any.

Yours, very truly,

SAMUEL J. BAIRD.

The fortunes of this new movement, that sought to confirm a novel and unwarranted interpretation of our organic law, I need not recount.

They are spread at length in Baird's Digest, pp. 650 to 733, to which Moore's Digest, p. 226, refers, traversing a painful conflict of seven years. It was a time of trouble. Must the author of every erroneous and dangerous sentiment be put on trial before the errors of his publications, whether by book, or pamphlet, or newspaper, and his irregularities, be condemned? To what, in troublous times, would the Church be reduced, save a police court or an arena of interminable strife?

The answer of the Assembly of 1834 to the above question, an answer which led directly to the disruption of the Church, because it denied to the Church her right to condemn erroneous opinions apart from the arraignment of the author, was in these words: "That in the opinion of this Assembly, to take up, and *try*, and condemn, any *printed publications* as heretical and dangerous, is equivalent to condemning the author as heretical; that to condemn heresy in the abstract can not be understood as the purpose of such trial; that the results of such trial are to bear upon, and seriously to affect, the standing of the author; and the fair and unquestionable mode of procedure is, if the author be alive and known to be of our communion, to institute process against *him*, and give *him* a fair and constitutional trial." Baird, p. 669 (8). The peculiar introduction of the word "*try*," in its technical meaning, and in an illegitimate application to the phrase, "*printed publications*," as though any court could ever dream of instituting forensic process against a *book*, an *opinion*, or a *thing*, is evidently inappropriate. The protest to this answer was this: "We protest, because in our judgment this decision not only establishes a principle erroneous in itself, but does in fact the very thing which it imputes to the memorialists; it casts censure on a former General Assembly for examining and condemning a heretical book before the author was tried and condemned by his Presbytery. We here refer to the case of W. C. Davis." Baird, 671.

I gladly and thankfully pass over the history. Would there were nothing here to recall the past! In 1834 the exercise of the episcopal power, in this respect, was *denied*. In 1835, and in 1837, it was triumphantly *reaffirmed* by the Presbyteries in General Assembly. I quote the action of the Assembly of 1835: "*Resolved* that, in the judgment of this General Assembly, it is the right, and may be the duty, of *any* judicatory of our Church to take up, and, if it see cause, to bear testimony against any printed publication which may be circulating in its bounds, and which in the judgment of that judicatory may be adapted to inculcate injurious opinions, and this whether the author be living or dead, whether he be in the communion of this Church or not, *whether he be a member of the judicatory expressing the opinion, or of*

some other. * * * To deny to our judicatories, as guardians of the churches, this right, *would be to deny to them one of the most precious and powerful means of bearing testimony against dangerous sentiments,* and guarding the children of the Church against "that instruction which causeth to err." No counter decision to this has ever been made. The action of the Assembly of 1836, of which my own father was the author, and which I well understand, did not antagonize with the definitive action of 1835, which is a precedent that can not be set aside in the Reunited Church. Just what the Assembly of 1836 did, was simply to maintain that, to episcopally condemn the errors of a publication, which errors the Assembly had already decided not to be errors, *after the formal judicial trial of their author for the same,* was improper, and in contravention of the rights of the author, as also a reversal of its own decision upon the merits of the errors themselves. Baird's Digest, p. 694 (3, 4, 5). Whatever difference of opinion might have existed as to the errors themselves, there can be no doubt that the position taken was correct, and in this view I have the sanction of my father himself.

What then, Moderator, is the result we have reached? It is no less than this: (1.) That the express letter of our constitution asserts the right of every one of our Presbyteries and of other courts to condemn error in doctrine and irregularity in practice arising therefrom, apart from judicial arraignment of the author. (2.) That our earlier and later assemblies and inferior courts have done this very thing, not merely "*in the abstract,*" as in the cases of Universalism and Socinianism, etc., but in the concrete, in any publication, whether book, sermon, or pamphlet, set on foot by any one, dead or alive, member of a Presbytery or not, and referring to the publication by title and to the author of the publication by name. (3.) That five memorable historic precedents or actual cases in court confirm and illustrate this exercise of episcopal power; and (4.) That judicial process against the author, or, in other words, the judicial arrest of the person, whether by responsible prosecutor or by common fame, instead of the examination and disapproval of the thing, is not the first but always the last resort; and this I affirm is the genius of our constitution, an instrument framed and fraught alike with the spirit of wisdom and charity, conservative alike of its doctrine and order and the standing of our ministry, the best possible means to save both the Church and her public teachers from defection and destruction.

And now, Moderator, this is the law of our Church, its established law, by the perpetual power of the standards, by memorable expositions and precedents in all our courts, contemporaneous with and suc-

ceeding the enactment of our constitution, and by the latest as well as earliest deliverances of our supreme court. I advance *now* to say, that it is the law of our Church, established triumphantly also by the maxims of common law and common sense, as well as by the universally recognized rules and decisions of all civil courts, where contradictory decisions have existed in the same court upon questions of law over which the court has proper jurisdiction. It has been confidently asserted in the Presbytery that the decision of 1834 is the law of the Presbyterian Church, and so regarded by ‘ninety-nine hundredths’ of the reunited body—a marvelous assertion, truly! Certainly the novel interpretation of 1822 was slain by the latter contrary interpretation of 1824. Upon what principle, may I ask, is that of 1834 exalted in force above the still later and contrary interpretation of 1835 in the undivided Church? Not, certainly, upon any principle of legal interpretation, either literal, rational, historical, or mixed. Not, certainly, upon the ground of the early practice of the Church, uninterrupted until 1822. Such logic is in face of all reason, all law, all sense, and is repugnant to the rule accepted by all judges and enforced in all civil courts. “*Stare decisis et quia non movere*”—to stand by the decisions and not to disturb rights and principles at rest—is an acknowledged rule. Judicial interpretations of the constitution, contemporaneous with its enactment and giving the sense of its framers, will be upheld. The construction of the law by the courts having jurisdiction in the case, at the time and afterward, is the surest and best construction, and no modal limitation is to be inferred which may defeat the plain intent of the law. A principle once established and continued, under the construction of the supreme court which has jurisdiction over questions of constitutional law, is to be maintained as the law of the land. The construction of the court obtains the force and acquires the sanction of constitutional law itself. While the constitution remains unchanged the construction remains unchanged also. “*Stare decisis*”—abide by the decisions. Otherwise a change of construction, in the interest of any excitement, strikes at the foundation of all principles and all rights confirmed under the previous construction and opens the door to interminable strife. The Assemblies of 1822 and 1834 violated this wholesome maxim. They did not “abide by the decisions.” They did disturb the “principles and rights at rest.” They uttered contradictory decisions to the old, and paved the way for what followed. Contemporaneous exposition was against them. An uninterrupted practice until 1822 was against them. It was incumbent on the Assemblies of 1835 and 1837, in the yet undivided Church, to reclaim and reinstate the early and true

construction of the clause in our constitution, which acknowledges the vested right of Presbytery "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the peace and purity of the Church," and set aside the interpretation of 1834, or else allow the new construction, antagonistic to the plain intent of the law and the whole spirit of our constitution. For who does not know that, where contradictory decisions exist, the "*last decision*" is always in force until reversed. Again I invoke the acknowledged maxims of law by which the courts of law are governed: "*Judicia posteriora sunt in lege fortiora*"—the later decisions are the stronger in law; "*Judiciis posterioribus fides est adhibenda*"—full faith is to be had in the later decisions; "*Judicia posteriora priora abrogant*"—later decisions annul the earlier contrary ones. Nothing is more settled. The last decision of the Supreme Court of the United States on a question of constitutional law will stand and be respected as against any former contradictory one, and the same is true of the last decision of the General Assembly, the supreme court of the Church, in its construction of the clause in question. Just as in legislation a later statute repeals the former contradictory one, so in adjudication the later judgment of the court annuls the prior ones in conflict therewith; and this is true in cases both of original and appellate jurisdiction. The last decision of the General Assembly is final, authoritative, and binding on all inferior courts over which it has jurisdiction, whether Synods, Presbyteries, or Sessions.

By what right, then, Moderator, in law, in logic, in reason, in sense, or history, can any one assert that the decision of 1834 is of supereminent authority and binding force, as against the later decision of 1835, which occurred in the undivided Church? Does opposition to the decision of 1835 constitute law, especially when no counter subsequent decision of the Assembly is to be found? All the more, again, by what right, when, by the very terms of our Reunion, we accept as law that which was legally established antecedent to the division of 1838, and our "Concurrent Declarations" affirm that the rules and precedents of each branch of the Church, only subsequent to that division, shall not be regarded as law, unless "approved by both the bodies" and "re-established in the united body?"

The use, by Presbytery, of an author's *name*, or of his publication, in condemning erroneous doctrines, publicly propagated by book, pamphlet, newspaper, and circulated over the author's own signature, or preached from the pulpit, advocated in special lectures on the platform, and advertised from place to place, can form no valid matter of objection to the exercise of episcopal power. It is only what occurs in every public discussion and literary criticism of the works of

theologians and moralists. The author uses it himself, and is well known. The position that to condemn the erroneous *opinions or doctrines* of a man is to condemn the *man himself as a heretic*, is uncharitable, unhistoric, unscriptural and illogical;—uncharitable to the court, for it subjects the court to the imputation of an attempt to secure, by indirection, a censure of the author, which it may fail to gain by judicial action, so forcing a construction of the act of the court that can not be justified;—uncharitable, also, to the author, for it labors to carry over to the author, who is always more and better than his errors, a disapproving judgment that bears against the errors alone. It is unhistoric and unscriptural, for, in all ages of the Church, apostolic and post-apostolic, and under all forms of discipline, only he is called a “heretic” who obstinately and contumaciously declines to hear the admonition of the Church. So Bingham shows, as I shall hereafter quote. So the Apostle instructs us: “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.” It is illogical on many accounts, for it assumes that a judgment against erroneous doctrine is a judgment against the person, character, and standing, of the author. And yet, in the same breath, severe judicial process is invoked to secure the very end apparently so much deplored! This is inconsistent, for surely the exercise of authoritative non-judicial power is milder and more tender than the exercise of forensic procedure,—for while a judgment against the author, by judicial process, aims at the person, character, standing and usefulness of the *man*, a judgment against the *thing* alone, leaves the person, character, standing, usefulness untouched. Pride may object, but neither justice nor reason can. Peter’s standing was not impaired by Paul’s reproof at Antioch. neither were the churches of Cilicia and Syria injured by the injunction of the Jerusalem Council.

The objection, moreover, assumes that because the author of error is under the jurisdiction of some Presbytery, therefore no judgment can emerge against his error, except upon judicial process. Formal verdict of “guilty,” as in the case of “crime,” must be found and formally declared. The whole man and his opinions must be so chained together, under the categories of moral guilt and crime, that no admonition may be allowed, and no injunction be imposed, except upon a personal conviction. That is, the mere fact of jurisdiction, or jurisdiction, *ipso facto*, compels extreme forensic process. But this is a *petitio*. Jurisdiction does not, *ex necessitate*, compel forensic process against the author. It is simply a *dictio juris*, or saying of the law, that both the man and his doctrines are amenable to the authority of some particular court, to be dealt with in any one of the different

constitutional modes deemed best for the edification of the Church. Jurisdiction imposes no necessity for this, rather than that, procedure. Such necessity rests on other grounds.

The objection still further assumes that the clause, Form of Government, Chap. X, Sec. 8, means only a condemnation of error *in thesi*,—in other words, the Presbytery is shut up either to judicial arraignment of the author, or to a deliverance against an abstraction. But what is the character of this abstraction? Where shall we find it? Where there is jurisdiction in cases of erroneous doctrine, it binds to judicial process, it is alleged. The logical consequence of this is, there can be no such thing as a condemnation of error in the abstract *inside of the Presbyterian Church*, no matter how wide-spread or rife it may be, for all persons inside the Presbyterian Church are under its *jurisdiction*, and where there is jurisdiction over error, judicial process, it is argued, must obtain. Fate is not more inevitable than the logical conclusion from these premises, that “*error in the abstract*” means error *outside of the Presbyterian Church*, that is, *outside of its jurisdiction*. The Presbyterian Church, therefore, can condemn erroneous opinions, rife in her own bosom, in no other way than by the judicial trial, *in detail*, of every man who holds them, *because* every man is under her jurisdiction! Condemnation of error *in thesi*, therefore, means condemnation of error *outside of the Presbyterian Church*! And this is what is meant by the clause in Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8! The whole authoritative character of the Presbytery, in relation to error in doctrine, inside of the Church, is reduced to judicial process. To such absurdity are we brought by objecting to the use of a *name*! See Baird’s Digest, p. 669 (8); 672, §120; 730, §168; 731 (4). Against such illogical position the decision of 1835 was directed; a decision still of binding force. It is gratuitous to say that the clause, Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8, means *only* condemnation *in thesi*, whether inside or outside our jurisdiction. The book does not say so. The interpretation is a gloss, not an exposition; a modal limitation upon the law, imported into the text, not drawn from it; a restriction of its broad intent, which no jurist would decree as just. Action *in thesi* is included, but the vested power of the Presbytery, under that clause, is not limited thereto. The criticism, that the exercise of episcopal power against error would cast some *reflection* on the author, is sentimental. It is the duty of Diotrephes, Alexander the coppersmith, Demas, Hymeneus and Philetus, to make such reflection impossible. But what is the reflection in this case compared with it in cases judicial?

The objection, moreover, is theologically untenable. Nothing is

clearer in the doctrine of Christ, than that the *errors* and *sins* of a believer are constantly condemned before God and the world, while to the person and standing of the believer there is "no condemnation" whatever. This one fact alone is conclusive proof of the incorrectness of the position that the condemnation of error is equivalent to the condemnation of its author. Were such a position true, in itself, or relatively, it would not be possible for God to condemn sin, in the believer, without condemning the *person* of the believer at the same time. It is bad theology. It is as bad polity. The spirit of the polity of Christ is in harmony with the spirit of the doctrine of Christ, and not against it. It is the grace of the gospel-doctrine that intervenes to protect the *person* of the believer, while it condemns his sins. It is the same grace of gospel-polity that intervenes to protect the not yet contumacious person of the teacher, while yet it condemns his errors. It is lawful, right, wise and expedient, to condemn the error and irregularity of any member of Presbytery, without arraigning his person in formal trial before a judicial bar.

Thus, the whole objection is uncharitable, unhistorical, unscriptural, and rests upon prejudices, assumptions, sentimentalisms, importations, illogical inferences, and irrelevant conclusions—all confronted by the letter of the constitution, the nature of the power vested in the Church, by apostolic example, by the precedents of our court, and by the doctrine of the Gospel itself.

The fundamental false postulate upon which the whole objection rests, and to which every argument of the objecter returns, is the denial, outright, of the *authoritative* character of episcopal or paternal power, confining that authority to judicial determinations, and restricting the idea of "discipline" to forensic process. It divests the testifying function of the Church of its whole *authoritative* value, reducing her witness for the truth of Christ, to mere advice, to be rejected or received, at will. It denies the binding nature of that testimony. It makes it simply moral suasion, man's word, not God's demand. In dealing with error everything not judicial is called *advisory*. It is a compromise with Independency—pure Brownism. It denies that the Church is the steward of God invested by Christ, ministerially, to rule the understanding, conscience, and belief of man, and dictate, according to God's Word, what shall be maintained as truth and what condemned as error, apart from judicial process. It asserts that, save in a case of judicial process, the *authority* of the Church in reference to error amounts to a mere power of *advice*, in other words, no authority whatever—a power binding none, but a mere opinion, to be entertained or not, at pleasure. It lifts the voice of

remonstrance against the authoritative exercise of the very power Christ has delegated to His Church, as an invasion of the rights of ministers and men, a power so abundantly illustrated by the Church, in all ages. It exclaims against *authority* where forensic forms are wanting. It relegates public offenses against the truth to the category of private ones, then challenges the right of court, or minister, to prosecute, unless some private injury has been received. It deems a private conference and explanation, with liberty abundant still to teach the error, an all-sufficient satisfaction to the Church and to the truth. It holds that admonition and injunction can never be employed for the arrest of error, till all judicial forms have been exhausted. Its tendency is evil. It disintegrates, demoralizes. It mars the sense of solemn obligation, creates indifference to vows, hostility to creeds, invites debates on things forever settled; degrades the ministry, destroys its influence, corrupts the Church, depreciates the truth of God, disputes the law of Christ, and grieves the Spirit of all grace. It ends, at last, in open insubordination, and resistance to all authority, judicial and episcopal alike. History repeats itself, and wisdom may take lesson from the past.

But, Moderator, in addition to all I have said, I would emphasize the fact, already alluded to, that the whole episcopal power the Presbytery possesses to condemn error in doctrine and practice, apart from forensic forms, so far from being unconstitutional, is grounded in that solemn evangelical commission which Christ, the Head of the Church, gave to His apostles, and, through them, to the gospel ministry for all time. In four passages of the New Testament (Matthew xvi. 19; Matthew xviii. 18; Matthew xxviii. 19, 20; John xx. 21-23), the charter for the whole disciplinary power of the Church is contained. It relates, not to extraordinary and miraculous endowment, peculiar to apostolic times, but to ordinary and perpetual functions, durable to the world's end. This plenary power, thus delegated by Christ to the apostles, each minister possesses to its whole extent. Will any one be so foolish as to say that, under such a charter, a Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly possesses less power, less authority, than is given by Christ to each one of the individual members composing it, or that such power is only to be exercised under judicial forms, for the preservation of truth and the suppression of error? Was it forensic process, think you, of which the Saviour spoke when He lifted up His hands on Olivet to bless His chosen, while His feet parted from the mountain and a cloud received Him out of their sight? Sir, it was a gift of episcopal power from the "chief Shepherd and Bishop" of our souls, bequeathed to ordained overseers of the flock, and adequate to all the

necessities of the Church henceforth and for evermore—an authoritative power of instruction, inspection, and government, to be executed in His name. And well did the first princes in the Church understand their commission. Were Simon Magus, or the incestuous Corinthian, served with an ecclesiastical libel, and allowed a year and a half, or two years, of judicial process, through ascending appellate courts, before a conclusive sentence overtook them? Were the erroneous opinions of Judaising and Gnosticising teachers, who ventilated their soul-subverting words and walked disorderly, tabulated into formal accusations, witnesses cited, cross-examinations had, wranglings perpetuated, two appeals taken, and bitter parties formed, before the errors themselves were condemned? Did Paul sist Peter in a judicial process at Antioch for his half Christian conduct and time-serving dissimulation? Was Titus commanded to institute judicial investigation against public offenders before he dared to “admonish” them, or “rebuke them sharply” and “before all,” that they might be “sound in the faith?” Think you the apostle reluctated to mention the names of Hymeneus and Philetus, Alexander and Demas, Hermogenes and Phygellus, or note by special designation the “unruly and vain talkers and deceivers of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake?” Was there any “*reflection*” here? Or think you that the Lord Jesus himself, in glory, deemed it “unconstitutional” and “out of order” to spot “that woman Jezebel” in the church at Thyatira, or name the Balaamites in Pergamos, before a responsible prosecutor had stood up, or formal charges had been preferred? No, Moderator, it was an exercise of episcopal power, as I have said, by the chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who walked unseen among the golden candlesticks and said, “I know thy works.”

The Thessalonian Church was enjoined to “warn them that are unruly.” Must judicial process be commenced by the Presbytery of Thessalonica? The Corinthian Church is enjoined “not to company with” the gross offenders named by the apostle. Must the offenses be first proved by judicial process against the offenders? The Ephesian Church is enjoined “to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” Was it that Presbytery must meet and institute a judicial process before admonition or injunction could go forth? Timothy and Titus are ordered to “rebuke openly, before all, them that sin, that others may fear.” Has a Presbytery less power than Timothy or Titus? “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.” Did the Presbytery refuse to admonish or reject until after judicial process? The Roman Church was

enjoined "to mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine" they had learned, and "avoid them." Was it to be done only after judicial process? John enjoins the whole Church not to "receive into the house," nor salute, a corrupter of the truth. Was it an injunction to institute judicial process? The truth is that the administration of godly discipline for the preservation of the truth and morals of the Church is by episcopal function, apart from forensic forms, except in the last resort. It is of the same nature as that of a father over his own house, who, having learned to rule well therein, "knows how to take care of the Church of God."

Who were the "some among you" in the Corinthian Church who denied the resurrection? Were they not as distinctly marked by these discriminating words as were the Cretan "slow-bellies and liars" themselves? What kind of power was it the Jerusalem Council exercised under a non-judicial reference from Antioch, against "certain men" well known, who accounted circumcision more than Christ and His cross, and preached without restraint their soul-subverting doctrine? Was it error only "in the abstract" that council condemned—error, evasive of all allusion to its propagators, or its reported relation to the particular Church at Antioch? Was forensic process ordered to be instituted against the Judaizers or those who had imbibed their false teaching? No. Episcopal power was invoked, the power of the Jerusalem Presbytery, as such, and exercised to its œcumenical extent. Error in doctrine and practice was condemned. The emissaries of Judaism, from their headquarters at Jerusalem, "false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out the liberty" of Gentile Christians in "Christ Jesus, that they might bring them into bondage," were put under the ban. The Churches in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia were all admonished and enjoined, apart from forensic procedure. Verse 24th of the fifteenth of Acts is a simple *preamble*; verse 29th is simply a resolution of *injunction*.

If we do but read the Scriptures carefully, we shall find that the discipline of the Apostolic Church confined itself to *admonition* first of all, solemnly and twice repeated, before procedure to greater severities. We shall next detect the more impressive *warning* that followed; then the sharp *rebuke* and the authoritative *injunction* against both error in doctrine and practice, by the sole exercise of episcopal power, vested by Christ in His chosen ministry, apart from all judicial process. We shall then learn that it was *contumacy* against such admonition, warning, rebuke, and injunction, that paved the way for *excommunication*. If judicial process ever entered it was only after all other means had been exhausted. Surely, if in the case of *notorious* error, like that of

Simon Magus, or *notorious* practice, like that of the "incestuous" man of Corinth, the notoriety of the fact, or what was "commonly reported" *and known to all as true*, made the offender, *ipso facto*, liable to excommunication, what folly it is to deny the Church's right of mere admonition and injunction when common fame and documentary evidence in court, bright as daylight, make the case beyond dispute!

The history of the sub-Apostolic Church, long before the existence of Theodosian and Justinian codes with civil penalties for error, only confirms the interpretation I have given of the exercise of episcopal power. Errors in doctrine and practice were condemned, uniformly, before extreme process was instituted against their authors. "The directions," says Bingham (*Antiquities*, II, p. 891), "were drawn up upon the models of those rules of the Apostles which forbade Christians to give any countenance to notorious offenders." "Errorists are they who, when they are reprov'd for their unsound opinions, *contumaciously resist*" (II, 981). The offenders were named, their errors condemned, and the Churches were warned and enjoined as well as the offender himself, who was admonished or rebuked. It is the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, framed upon the Apostolic model, in all times and countries, and signal examples of which are found in all her history. "It thus appears," says Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrief, convener of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, "that the Free Church, by retaining the old form of process as part of her law, *would restrain a Presbytery from instituting or entertaining a regular process against any minister until all means have been exhausted for preventing the necessity of such a process being entered on.*" (*Practice of the Free Church*, Edinburg, 1871, p. 118.) It is the assertion of episcopal power as lodged in the Presbytery, and precisely to the same end is the comment of Stewart of Pardovan, the Blackstone of the Presbyterian Church, in his "Methodised Observations" upon the clause in our Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8, giving power to the Presbytery to "condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church"—upon which he says that the Presbytery has not only the power of "*censuring ministers*," of "rebuking gross or contumacious sinners," but also the power "of answering of questions, cases of conscience, solving of difficulties in doctrine or discipline, with petitions from their own or those in other Presbyteries, *examining and censuring according to the Word of God any erroneous doctrine which hath been publicly or more privately vented within their bounds*, and the endeavoring, the reducing, and conversion of any that remain in error and schism." (*Obser. Method.*, Book I, Title XII, Section 4.)

How different from our practice, that would do nothing except

resort to judicial process in the very start! Deprive the Church of Christ of her right to bear testimony against and condemn error in doctrine and practice, vented in her own bosom, apart from judicial process, to admonish, warn, reprove, rebuke, enjoin; deny to Presbytery this right, a right accorded to every pastor and elder by the Word of God, and enforced in every Apostolic letter, and the mission of the Church, as a witness for the Truth, its pillar, ground, and guardian, is concluded forever. With this, therefore, I close the discussion of the first reason to the first point of my Complaint, by affirming that the action of the Presbytery of Cincinnati was a repudiation of the right vested in it by the Head of the Church, to condemn erroneous opinions which injure its peace and purity, a right guaranteed by the constitution itself and protected by parliamentary rule.

(2.) The second reason in support of my first point of Complaint is, that the action of Presbytery, sustaining the decision of the Moderator (see first point of Complaint), was "*a violation of parliamentary rule, in derogation of my constitutional right to introduce my Preamble and Resolutions, and to discuss the merits of the same after they were seconded, and I was entitled to the floor, no matter what the result might have been on the final vote, after discussion.*"

I claim, Moderator, that, when I was interrupted on the floor of the Presbytery by Dr. Morris, who rose to a "point of order," asserting that my Preamble and Resolutions were *unconstitutional*, and, therefore, that even the "consideration" of them was not to be entertained, and when the Moderator of the Presbytery decided that the point was "*well taken*," and the Presbytery *sustained*, on appeal, this decision, I was perfectly "in order." The rules in order in both houses of Congress, in our State Legislatures, and in deliberative bodies in general, are derived from the British Parliament, and modified to suit our various circumstances. The rules of order for our Church judicatories have the same origin. We have thus acquired a system of parliamentary regulations, prescribing and defining a certain fixed mode of procedure in the course of deliberative business. Our general rules of order, which form no part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, as the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church forms no part of them, are inscribed in our Digest, pp. 204 to 208, and are forty-three in number. As to the order prescribed in "judicial process," I do not hear speak. It belongs to the process itself, Presbytery acting as a court, and not as a deliberative and parliamentary body. According to Rule of Order XIV, whenever a motion is made, seconded, written, and read aloud, and the mover addresses the Moderator (Rule XXXI), being entitled to the floor, he conforms to

the rules of order laid down for the guidance of our courts. My Preamble and Resolution were in writing; they were duly seconded; no other business was before the house, and I was entitled to the floor by the Moderator's decision, none disputing it; I addressed the chair; I was respectful to my brethren. The Investigating Committee had reported, and the official documents necessary to sustain my Preamble and Resolutions were upon the table, subject to the call of myself or any member of the body. I had not only a constitutional right to introduce a Preamble and Resolutions, the object of which was to disapprove erroneous opinions already disapproved of by the Committee itself, but also a parliamentary right to debate the Preamble and Resolutions themselves *upon their merits*. There are two classes of motions, both of which are in order, but only one of which is in order to be discussed upon their merits; in other words, there are motions *debateable* and *undebateable*. In conformity with all parliamentary manuals, our rules of order specify both. (See Rule XVIII.) The motions *undebatable* on their merits are: "to lay on the table," "to take up business," "to adjourn," and "the call for the previous question." All other motions, without exception, are *debateable on their merits*. No power can deprive a man of his right to debate a debateable motion. My Preamble and Resolutions, therefore, were not only "in order," according to our rules, but debateable on their merits by the same rules; and this is a universal rule. (See the Manuals of Jefferson, Cushing, Roberts, and Warrington, on "Motions.") I was "in order." I had violated no parliamentary rule of procedure in business. The action of the Presbytery, sustaining the Moderator and declaring me "out of order," was, therefore, itself, a *violation* of parliamentary rule in derogation of my constitutional rights of free discussion on the merits of the case before us. It was abundantly competent for the Presbytery, after I had been heard, to make their assumed unconstitutionality of my motion their reason, if they saw fit, for voting down my motion, and putting my Preamble and Resolutions out of the house. But, I submit that such assumed unconstitutionality was no reason whatsoever why, when perfectly "in order," I should have been pronounced "out of order," as at a previous Presbytery, and thus twice be denied both my constitutional and parliamentary rights to debate the merits of my motion. I shall return to this again. I was perfectly "*in order*."

(3.) The third reason in support of my first point of Complaint (see first point of Complaint) was, that "said decision of the Moderator, sustained and sanctioned by the Presbytery, was an exercise of the most responsible prerogative reserved to the General Assembly, viz.:

that of deciding questions of constitutional law and binding its interpretation on the court as a rule of action." Individual Presbyteries or Synods have no right to bind their interpretations of constitutional law as a rule of action on the court, much less, where the supreme court itself has, after a sharp contest, announced a definitive decision, and applicable precisely to such cases as the one referred to in my Preamble and Resolutions. It matters not, that a person, charged with teaching erroneous opinions, denies the opinions charged, or even his own written language. This is no bar to deliberation. "*Allegans contraria non est audiendus.*" It rather concludes the case against him. A man may multiply denials and self-contradictions perpetually. This may be a reason why preamble and resolutions should not be adopted, upon a final vote, but it is no reason why they should be declared as "out of order," nor is it any reason in support of the Presbytery's assumption of the Assembly's prerogative to decide constitutional law and bind it as a rule of action on the court. Again, I appeal to the acknowledged maxim of law, "*Ejus est interpretari, cujus est condere,*"—it belongs to that power to *interpret* the law, whose office it is to *settle and establish* it. To the General Assembly, therefore, composed of the representatives of Presbyteries, or in other words, to Presbyteries *in Assembly* by means of their representations, but not to Presbyteries individually, pertains this high prerogative. Otherwise, our Church would become a very Babel of multiplied and contradictory decisions upon questions of constitutional law, confusion worse confounded. The interpretation of the Assembly is binding law, and not the interpretation of the individual Presbytery.

The Presbytery's action assumed to interpret the clause in our Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8, "to condemn erroneous opinions," etc., as meaning, that no court can condemn such opinions except by judicial arraignment of their author. But this exception is an interpolation of the constitution. It is an addition, an unauthorized gloss, not only in the face of a previous and discriminating clause as to "*judging ministers,*" a clause involving both the *person* and the *judicial process* together, but directly in face of contrary and binding decisions of our supreme court itself. Where does the constitution say, Moderator, that Presbyteries have no power to condemn erroneous opinions, except by the modal limitation of judicial process? Nowhere. That limitation defeats "the plain intent of the law," and is a mere *obiter dictum*, without the least authority. Not less unauthorized is the assertion that "the exercise of episcopal power is a usurpation of the judicial without submitting to its limitations." This is to deny both the letter of the constitution and the decisions of our

supreme court. Judicial process is always the last resort and not the first. The Presbytery had no right to put *its* interpretation upon the constitution in face of the Assembly's interpretation of our law, already given.

And this was the doctrine of the very Assembly of 1834 itself. In the most express terms that Assembly affirmed, that to the General Assembly alone it belongs to *interpret* the constitution. It said these words, "the Form of Government vests the right of deciding questions of constitutional law, not in Synods, *but in the General Assembly.*" Moore's Digest, p. 263 (3). According to this announcement, no inferior court and no moderator may assume this prerogative and bind a new interpretation on the court as a rule of action. The thing to be specially remarked, just here, is this, that the very Assembly of 1834, which gave a wrong *interpretation* of the clause, "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the peace and purity of the Church," by construing said clause with an unauthorized limitation, was the very Assembly which yet maintained that the *Supreme court alone* is competent to interpret the constitution and bind that interpretation as a rule of action on all our courts.

Precisely the same doctrine was reaffirmed by the Old School General Assembly of 1844, six years after the division. It said these words: "What interest has the Synod more than other Synods or Presbyteries in giving a wrong exposition of our book. When we *interpret* our constitution, the voice of the whole Church should be heard." (Moore's Digest, p. 598 (3). Thus, both the Old School and the New School brethren agreed in this, that the prerogative of interpreting our constitution and binding the interpretation upon all the courts, as a rule of action, *belongs to the General Assembly alone.* And all the more is this evident as we learn, from our supreme decisions, that no complaint will lie, in any case, against a court for declining to usurp this function of the Assembly (Moore's Digest, p. 598 (4), but that it will lie against the exercise of this function. (Moore's Digest, p. 593 (4). Thus, the general law maxim, "*Ejus est interpretari cujus est condere,*" the constitution itself, in its literal, rational and historical construction, brethren of both Old and New School alike, with the binding decisions of our Digest and its historical precedents, all show that the Cincinnati Presbytery, in the action I complain of, usurped the high prerogative of the General Assembly.

(4.) The fourth reason in support of my first point of Complaint is (see first point of Complaint), "that the action of Presbytery was *the turning of a constitutional question into a parliamentary rule of order*, so inventing a new rule in derogation of my constitutional and parliamentary rights."

Moderator, what do we mean when we use the expressions "law" and "order?" Is each one pleonastic of the other? Or, is there a well-defined and settled distinction between them? True, in a general and wide sense, law is a rule of action. But when we use it in the expression, "law and order," what is it we mean by *law*, and what by *order*, each as distinguished from the other, in deliberative bodies? The conceptions are totally different. By "law" we mean, our constitution, an organic statute, or a decision of the supreme court. Our Confession of Faith, Form of Government, Book of Discipline, Catechisms, Directory of Worship, and the decisions of the General Assembly, are what we call "*law*." By "order" we mean, conformity to a prescribed mode of procedure in business in a deliberative body, and nothing more. When we say *law*, the mind goes straight to the constitution and its authorized interpretation. When we say *order*, the mind goes straight to parliamentary rules of procedure in business. The termini of the two conceptions, and the contents of the two, are totally different. The one relates wholly to the constitution and its interpretation, the other relates wholly to the general rules of our judicatories for procedure in business—it relates to "*proceedings*"—and such is the definition of lexicographers and parliamentarians. Mr. Webster's definition of "order" is as follows: "Adherence to the point in discussion according to established rules of debate; as the member is not in order, *i. e.*, he wanders from the question." "Established mode of proceeding;—the motion is not in order." "Regularity; settled mode of operation." The definition in Jefferson's Manual is as follows: "Order in conformity with the *rules* of order laid down. Departure from the rules, is a breach of order." In that majestic volume of a thousand pages by Mr. Cushing, on the "Law and Practice of Legislative Assemblies," founded on Hatsell's celebrated precedents, we have the following clear and unambiguous words: "All questions of order are determined by reference to the *rules* of order. Any member, rightfully in possession of the house, his motion having been seconded, is *in order*." "And it is the right of members to originate propositions, at their pleasure, for the consideration of the house; and any member, in possession of the house, may make any motion he thinks proper."

Now, Moderator, where in all our rules of order is the interpretation of the constitution according to the Assembly of 1834 to be found? Where is our constitution found in the rules of order? Where are any of the decisions of any of our General Assemblies found in the rules of order? And by what right did the Presbytery of Cincinnati make *its* interpretation of the constitution a rule of order, and, upon that

ground, rule my Preamble and Resolutions as “*out of order?*” The thing is too evident to require discussion. *Nothing is a “point of order” in parliamentary debate which does not relate to accepted rules of order prescribed for procedure in business.* I was perfectly in order, according to the rules of our court, as I have already shown. I violated no parliamentary regulation, either at Glendale or at Cincinnati. My paper was before the house, written and seconded, no other business being before the body, and was just as much in order as the papers of Dr. Morris or those of Messrs. Ritchie, Hills, and Stanton. A man is in order, if he conforms to the parliamentary rules of procedure in business. He may be perfectly in order, while his motion may be perfectly unconstitutional, and his motion may be perfectly constitutional, while he himself is as perfectly “out of order.” Therefore it was a usurpation of my rights, when a question of constitutional law was turned into a “point of order,” entertained by the Moderator, and sustained by the Presbytery, so taking from me, both my constitutional and parliamentary rights to discuss my Preamble and Resolutions on their merits, and to adduce in their support the “facts” which had been introduced into the house by the official report of its own committee.

But it has been said, there are such things as “constitutional rules,” and we have a right, therefore, to turn questions of constitutional law into “rules of order.” The logic of this reasoning is as fallacious as the intuition of the facts is obscure. No calculus, known to mathematics to-day, is able to fix the amount of power necessary to draw such an enormous conclusion, and no logical harness, yet made, is strong enough to endure the strain. For, “constitutional rules” relate to polity, and are parts of the constitution itself. They are actual amendments to, or interpretations of, the Articles of Government and Discipline, in every case, however, “excluding alteration of the doctrine and fundamental principles of the Church.” (Moore’s Digest, p. 328.) Proposed to all the Presbyteries and adopted, upon overture, by two thirds of them, they are then, formally, declared by the Assembly to be *law*, and are irrevocable, henceforth, by the Assembly itself or by any subordinate court. They are legislative acts of the whole Church. Presbytery can not make them, nor unmake them; neither can Assembly. As part of the constitution, they have the whole force of constitutional law. These rules are of the nature of judicial order of proceeding definitely defined, which, though not parliamentary rules of order, are defined order itself. Clearly, a motion against any of these could not be entertained, for here law and order are made identical. Where the constitution itself, as in judicial

process, assumes the feature of a mandate, an express "shall," it is then settled order itself, and no motion can be entertained against it, making it out of order. The *ground* of refusal to entertain such motion, is not that the motion is unconstitutional, however true that may be, but that it is against order itself, and no motion is in order that is out of order.

Nor are our Rules of Order part of our Constitution. In express terms our Digest says: "The following rules, not having been submitted to the Presbyteries, *make no part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church.*" (Moore's Digest, p. 204.) And even if they did, yet, such a rule as the one the Cincinnati Presbytery has legislated into existence, on the basis of 1834, has no place in the catalogue. But now, we have been suddenly presented with a new rule of procedure, we may call it Rule XLIV, added to the list, and it will read this way: "*No Presbytery shall consider any motion, preamble or resolution, condemning erroneous opinions under its jurisdiction which injure the peace and purity of the Church, unless after judicial process of the author of said opinions.*" The odor of it, Moderator, savors very much of an attack upon the constitution indeed, but then, you know, it is only a "rule of order!" I admit, Moderator, that under such an enactment, my Preamble and Resolutions would have been out of order, but I deny that the Assembly has made such an enactment, or bound such a rule upon the court. Where is such a rule to be found, even in our constitutional rules? Where is the Presbytery's right to turn a question of constitutional law, in face of the binding decision of the Assembly, into a rule of order? It is pure legislation, an assumption, by Presbytery, of the function of the General Assembly; a violation of the dearest and most sacred rights of motion and discussion, guaranteed to every Presbytery by the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and by parliamentary rule. How often must it be repeated before we understand it, that nothing is a "point of order" which does not relate to established rules of order prescribed for procedure in business.

But now, Moderator, granting that all I have said goes for nothing; admit, for the sake of argument, the unconstitutionality of my Preamble and Resolutions; allow that the Presbytery's construction of the constitution was right, as against the binding decisions of the General Assembly; grant that there is no such thing as non-judicial power to condemn error; grant everything that the brethren opposed to my motion maintained, or might maintain, I still deny that a man is "out of order" simply because his motion or preamble and resolutions either are, or assumed to be, "*unconstitutional.*" You may lay them on the table, or vote them down, after they have been moved, seconded and dis-

cussed, even though they declare that the constitution itself is unconstitutional. But the mover is "in order," and has both a constitutional and a parliamentary right to be heard on their merits.

In support of this position I adduce the testimony of several gentlemen of eminent authority in parliamentary experience. The first I mention is the Hon. J. F. Follett, late Speaker of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio.

CINCINNATI, O., October 9, 1876.

HON. J. F. FOLLETT:

DEAR SIR—The *constitution* of the Presbyterian Church, Form of Government, Chapter X, Section 8, gives a Presbytery the "*power to condemn erroneous* opinions that injure the peace and purity of the Church. Suppose I offer the following:

"WHEREAS, A. B. has taught and teaches so and so, which is "erroneous" (here I quote the proofs of error in language of the author), therefore,

"*Resolved*, That A. B. is in error in said opinions, and is hereby enjoined not to propagate them.

I. Is this preamble and resolution "OUT OF ORDER" if it is duly moved, seconded, and the mover has the floor, and there is no other business before the house?

II. Suppose some one rises to what he chooses to call a "*point of order*," viz.: That according to *his interpretation* of the constitution, the above clause excludes the condemnation of error, except in the abstract, and that forty General Assemblies have so decided, and therefore it is "*out of order*" even to "consider" the preamble and resolution, is the mover "*out of order*" on that account?

Is any interpretation of the constitution, *pro* or *con*, to be made a parliamentary rule for procedure in business? Admit that the Preamble and Resolution are against the constitution itself, most clearly, does that make their mover "*out of order*," and close his mouth on the merits of the case?

Suppose a member of the legislature moves to burn up the constitution of the State, or to secede from the Union, and the motion is seconded, and the mover has a right to the floor, is he "*out of order*" because he is unconstitutional? Is he not entitled to speak to the full merits of the case, even though the house will vote down his resolutions instantly?

I hold that the "constitution" is one thing and "order" is another. Order in a deliberative body, is conformity to a prescribed mode of procedure in business and relates wholly to parliamentary rule, while

constitution or organic law is a wholly different thing, and no interpretation of it may be made a parliamentary rule under which to declare a resolution opposed to that interpretation as "*out of order*," if it is duly seconded and the member has a right to the floor and no other business is before the house? Please inform me, is my view right or wrong?

Truly yours, etc., etc.,

* * * *

"I have no hesitation in saying your view is right."

JOHN F. FOLLETT."

1. Does the unconstitutionality of a motion or preamble and resolution make said motion or preamble and resolution, ipso facto, "*out of order*?"

"It does not."

J. F. FOLLETT."

2. Is an unconstitutional motion, preamble or resolution, if duly seconded, no other business being before the house, "*in order*," and debateable on its merits?

"It is."

Very truly,

J. F. FOLLETT."

I also add the following answer from my respected friend, Hon. Rufus King, President of the late convention of the State of Ohio, assembled for the revision of its Constitution;—an answer written to the same communication addressed to the Hon. Mr. Follett:

"CINCINNATI, O., October 8, 1876.

"MY DEAR SIR—Unless precluded by some special rule of order, the Presbytery was bound to entertain such a motion as yours. I do not see how it can even be questioned. Nothing which has relation to the laws, powers, or duties of the body, can be out of order, if not expressly forbidden by the rules of order.

Yours very truly,

RUFUS KING."

I add also the following correspondence had with the Hon. Schuyler Colfax, formerly Speaker of the House of Representatives, and President of the Senate, of the United States:

CINCINNATI, O., November 1, 1876.

HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX:

DEAR SIR—Allow me to ask your decision, as a parliamentarian, upon the following questions: 1. Is it the province of a presiding officer, or of any deliberative body, acting under written parliamentary

"Rules of Order," to make this or that assumed or real interpretation of the Constitution a "point of order," or a "rule of order," when said interpretation is no part of the "Rules of Order?" 2. Does the unconstitutionality of a proposition make it, *ipso facto*, "out of order?" 3. Is any motion, Preamble, or Resolution, even if unconstitutional, debateable on its merits, if duly offered and seconded, and not excluded by the specified class of "undebateable motions" known as such to parliamentarians? Please be so kind as to give me your opinion.

Very truly yours, etc., etc.,

* * * *

"SOUTH BEND, IND , November 7, 1876.

"DEAR SIR—Your letter has just reached me. In Congress, the presiding officers do *not* rule out questions on any grounds of unconstitutionality. This practice is supposed to be the true *inference* from the British rule laid down in Jefferson's Manual, Sec. 35. "If an amendment be proposed inconsistent with one already agreed to, it is fit ground for its *rejection* by the House; but it is not within the competence of the speaker to suppress it, as if it were against order; for were he permitted to draw questions of consistence within the *vortex of order*, he might usurp a negative on important modifications and suppress instead of subserve the legislative will."

Respectfully yours,

SCHUYLER COLFAX."

I also add the following correspondence with the Hon. Edward McPherson, for many years Clerk of the National House of Representatives and a universal authority on parliamentary law and precedent throughout the country.

CINCINNATI, O., October 9, 1876.

HON. EDWARD MCPHERSON:

DEAR SIR—Our Form of Government, Chap. X, Sec. 8, with which you are well acquainted, gives Presbytery the "power," among other things, "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church." This is a function of Episcopal power, as I take it, discriminated from the function of Judicial power, which is involved in the previous clause, viz., of "judging ministers." My question is this, would a Preamble or, in other words, a proposition, introduced into Presbytery, reciting erroneous doctrines or views propagated by any of its ministers, with the necessary proofs therefor, taken from official documents on the table, or otherwise, and an appended Resolution condemning the error and enjoining its new propagation, be "out of order" or "unconstitutional?" And would an amendment, unconstitutional in itself, be "out of order" on that ground? To what extent does the jurisdiction of a parliamentary officer go? May any proposition or motion duly made and seconded be debated on its merits, if within the rules as to debateable motions? A brief answer to these interrogations will place me under obligations to your kindness.

Very sincerely yours, etc.,

* * *

“GETTYSBURG, PA., Nov. 10, 1876.

“DEAR SIR—I have been from home for several weeks and your letter of the 9th October did not reach me till after the 19th.

“Please excuse the delay of this reply. I believe I understand your point.

“As to the amendment. An amendment to a pending proposition, germane to it, is in order, without any regard to the alleged unconstitutionality. A presiding officer never undertakes to pass upon the effect of an amendment. His jurisdiction is wholly confined to the parliamentary questions of germaneness, degree, etc.

“As to the proposition. Any proposition duly offered and properly pending is subject to debate upon its merits, within the rules, as well if it be clearly unconstitutional, or if only presumably so. To deny this would be seriously to fetter all deliberative proceedings.

With great respect,

Truly yours,

EDWARD MCPHERSON.”*

Fortified by such testimony as the above, I maintain, therefore, (1.) That by “*order*” is meant conformity to prescribed “*rules of order*” for procedure in business; (2.) That nothing is a “*point of order*” which does not relate to these rules; (3.) That our parliamentary rules of order are no part of our constitution; (4.) That constitutional rules are no part of the rules of order; (5.) That Presbytery had no right to *interpret* the constitution, bind its interpretation upon the court, and turn it into a rule of order; (6.) That Presbytery had no right to legislate a new rule into existence conflicting with the binding decision of the Assembly; (7.) That a man is always “*in order*” when he conforms to the rules of order, and only “*out of order*” when he departs from the same; (8.) That a man may be perfectly “*in order*” when his motion is utterly *unconstitutional*, and his motion may be perfectly *constitutional*, when the man himself is utterly “*out of order*.”

I need say no more on this first point of complaint. I complain that the dearest right of a Presbyterian minister, protected by a true construction of the constitution and by parliamentary rules, to both which I conformed, were taken from me, on the floor of the Presbytery, by an arbitrary decision of that body, and this action I submit to the judgment of the Synod.

II. The second point of Complaint is against the Presbytery’s action, in accepting, and thereby making official documents of, the Special Report and collaterals of the Committee of Investigation in the case of

* The communications from Mr. Colfax and Mr. McPherson I did not receive till after the meeting of Synod. I have taken the liberty to insert them in the speech.

Mr. McCune, "*without any action whatever to amend or to rectify statements, judgments, and personalities therein contained, at variance with Righteousness and Truth.*" This, of course, relates *wholly to myself and the Presbytery*. I complain of no statements, judgments, or personalities, in reference to any one else.

(1.) The first reason in support of this second point of Complaint is, "That the Report opens with, and its recommendations rest upon, statements *contrary to truth.*"

(a.) It says, my Resolution, offered at Glendale, and printed in my pamphlet, was a "Resolution *censuring Mr. McCune.*" This is not true. The Resolution simply asked Presbytery to "reject the principles" Mr. McCune has advocated, and to say that the "*course pursued*" is in "*contravention*" of our law, and "*inconsistent*" with membership in our body. It relates wholly to *things*, proper to be acted upon by the episcopal power of the body. It proposes no "*censure*" of the *person*, not even an admonition. It implies no censure whatever. It is just what our Church has done scores of times, without censure, and repeats every time upon "review and control" of Records, and in public deliverances whenever necessary.

(b.) It says my pamphlet made "light of the Committee and its work." In no paragraph, sentence, or clause of my pamphlet, can a syllable be found authenticating such a charge, or reflecting in the slightest degree upon the "*the Committee and its work.*" The statement is wholly gratuitous.

(c.) It says, that my pamphlet "*contains the staple and authority for the rumors existing against Mr. McCune.*" This also is untrue. My pamphlet was itself the product of "rumors," and of various publications, as also of previous discussions, long before the pamphlet was born; and this was well known to the Committee. It was neither the staple, nor the authority, "*for the rumors existing,*" at the time of its publication, nor at the time of Presbytery's appointment of its Committee. And none knew this better than the draftsman of the Report, Dr. J. G. Montfort. The pamphlet was published about two weeks after the Presbytery arose at Glendale, April 13, 1876. Now then, Moderator, I affirm that Mr. McCune's book on "Organic Union" was published in 1866, and has since been fully circulated. The "Christian Unity," edited by Mr. McCune, appeared in November, 1873. Dr. Montfort's adverse criticism upon the principles of that paper appeared in the same month, saying: "It will be seen that Bro. McCune aims at a great change in the Churches." In August, 1875, this same widely-circulated paper contained an editorial by the drawer of the report. He says, in that editorial, among other things: "If

these brethren are for organization and association, or are already organized and associated, the external bond of union being the convention or association which met in New York in 1873, in Cincinnati in 1874, and in Suffolk, Va., in 1875, *we are at a loss to understand* how Mr. McCune or Mr. Mellish can be willing to maintain connection with the Presbyterian or Baptist Church. We should suppose that each would pass at once for an old organization that is unauthorized and extra-scriptural to a new one on a New Testament Basis." "The Address to all Christian Ministers and Churches in North America" was issued in 1874. A long debate between Mr. McCune and the Christian Standard occurred in 1875 and the earlier part of 1876. The L. and M. L. "Declaration and Basis," and the Council were in the latter part of 1875; and the Herald and Presbyterian published the proceedings, as did other papers. Public discussions by Messrs. McCune, Morris, Skinner, and Layman, besides, occurred in the Cincinnati Gazette, Commercial, and Times, also discussions in the Christian Observer, the United Presbyterian, Interior, the Presbyterian, the Journal and Messenger, the North-western Christian Advocate, and other papers, all which I present as evidence for the point I make, before ever the Glendale Presbytery met, or my pamphlet saw the light. An interlocutory meeting had even been proposed in reference to this matter. The opening sentences of my pamphlet are themselves a refutation of the Committee's statement. The resolution of the Presbytery under which the Committee was appointed, and beginning thus, "*Whereas, for some time past there have been current rumors,*" etc.,—a form of expression penned by the drawer of the report himself,—seals the allegation of the Committee as untrue. With what conscience, then, or with what sense of justice or of truth, could the drawer of the report and the Committee base their report upon the false statement that my pamphlet was the "*staple and authority for the rumors existing,*" in "*time past,*" and into which they were appointed to inquire, before the pamphlet was born? On this I need say no more, except that nothing could be more unjust or untrue than the attempt to make me the author of Common Fame; a device contrived (1), to cut away any Presbyterial action on the ground of Common Fame in the case, and (2) to lay the ground that I be required to become a responsible prosecutor. Thus does the report of the Committee open with, and its recommendations rest upon, three unfounded statements.

(2.) The second reason in support of the second point of Complaint is, that this accepted report steps out of its way to *raise a new case*, instead of confining itself to the terms of the resolution under which the Committee was appointed." This policy, in the light of the pre-

ceding untruthfulness, was evidently to my damage before the public and was beyond the province of the Committee. The terms of that resolution were, to have a "full conference with Mr. McCune," and to inquire into all the "*facts*" bearing on the "*case*" of Mr. McCune, and report to Presbytery. Under these instructions the Committee assumes to pronounce upon me personally and upon the publication of my pamphlets, written in defense of my rights as a Presbyterian, and of the faith and order of the Church, a condemnatory judgment. It recommends that I be dealt with for publishing the pamphlet. My mouth having been closed in the Glendale Presbytery, I am to be dealt with for opening it outside of the Presbytery, and then have it closed again on the merits of the case when the Presbytery met thereafter. It recommends that Presbytery take action to the effect that I either "prove or retract" certain picked statements by Mr. McCune, and that I "*ought*" so to do, in default of which, it suggests a prosecution for "*slander*." Was this, Moderator, the work the Committee was sent to do under the terms of the resolution, recommending no action whatever in the case it was appointed to examine, and the material "*facts*" of which case it was required to present to the Presbytery. It turned aside to do as I have intimated. I submit that this was an unlawful exercise of the functions of the Committee, in the interest of a personal attack upon myself. And yet Presbytery accepted all this without a word of rebuke or official correction.

(3.) The third reason in support of the second point of Complaint is, "That it implies a censure on the undersigned and recommends the Presbytery to pass a judgment which also implies a censure." Censure for publication, censure in case I declined to "prove or retract." It says I "*ought*" to do one or the other, that is, I am under moral obligation to do this, and in case I do not, then a prosecution for "slander" may be the next appropriate step! What is all this, Moderator, but an implied "censure" of me personally? All this, I affirm, was beyond the province of the Committee under the terms of its instructions; and against this unprecedented liberty I complain, as also against the formal acceptance of such a report, giving it the sanction of an official document. I hold as firmly as any man can, that a public slanderer "*ought*" to prove or retract, and that no apologies short of this "*ought*" to be accepted. Ministerial character is too precious to be trifled with.

(4.) The fourth reason in support of the second point of Complaint is, "That part of the Collaterals of the Report indulge in *gross personalities* against the undersigned, which would not be tolerated for one

moment in debate, and ought not to be tolerated in an official document."

The Collaterals are specified by the Committee in their Special Report, and are expressly said by them to be a "part of our report." What they contain was well known to Dr. Monfort, the Chairman of the Committee, and to the Committee itself. I think it will be difficult for any one to show wherein I personally have violated the first principles of Christian courtesy or gentlemanly respect, by the use of opprobrious and vituperative epithets against any one. I have sought simply to defend the faith and order of my Church, in a manly and Christian way. But the Report of the Committee has introduced into the Presbytery an array of gross personalities, the parallel to which can not be found in any official document, secular or political, in the country. Collateral No. 1, p. 5, "violent, unlawful and slanderous assault;" "attacked and villified," p. 6; "unrighteous attempt," p. 6; "proposed to reach this high-handed and tyrannical result," p. 7; "assailing me with a great mass of quotations of garbled phrases," p. 7; "shameful unfairness," p. 7; "flagrantly unjust," "slanderous," "defiant," "disrespectful to the lawful jurisdiction of the Presbytery," "frantic outcry," p. 8; "slanderous charges," "crying injustice," p. 10; "unprecedented in the history of slander," p. 5. Collateral No. 4, "violent, unlawful and contumacious assault," p. 1; "recklessly and officiously asserts," p. 5; "defamatory pamphlet," "tyrannical and false assumption," p. 5. Collateral No. 5, "untrue and slanderous statements," p. 3; "defamer," "shamefully untrue statements," p. 4; "shameful and outrageous wrong," p. 12; "violently contumacious and defamatory statements," p. 26.

Moderator, I blush for my Church. I blush for the degeneracy of manners that prevails in our midst, and for that demoralization of Christian sentiment and propriety which could allow our ears to be shocked by such things in a court of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hang my head in shame. I complain righteously to this body. Personalities, sir, are the order of the day, and it is time that the Church of Christ set its face like a flint against the enormity. It pleased my ear, I must say it in justice to some of my brethren, to hear their expressions of indignation at the character of the Report, styling it "outrageous," "horrid," and "unparalleled in the history of the Church." But that the Presbytery itself, under the lead of those who controlled it, should tolerate and accept such a Report without rebuke, tells its own story.

III. The third point of Complaint is against the action of Presbytery, in "adopting an answer to the protest of the undersigned, Sep-

tember 15th, 1876, Mt. Auburn, *without rectifying its erroneous statements and the false impression it is calculated to make.*"

(1.) My first reason in support of this third point of Complaint is, "That said answer does *not accurately represent the facts of the case.*" My second reason in support of the third point is, that "*it represents the undersigned as being out of order and furnishing reasonable grounds for the annoyances and unlawful interruptions under which he was forced to retire from the floor of the Presbytery.*" My third reason is, "*that no withdrawal of the protest for alteration, on account of misrepresentation in the answer, could make the protest "more agreeable" to the "views" of the undersigned.*" I take these three reasons together, and for the first two of them adduce the public reports of the occurrences at Mt. Auburn, certified to, as correct reports, by the gentlemen of the press who made them. I also present my Protest and the Answer of the Presbytery to the same. (Here read the Gazette and Commercial reports.)

Now, Moderator, I make the following points: (1.) I was ruled as in order, by the Chair, when reading the Special Report of the Investigating Committee. (2.) I never traversed that report with "unlimited" range, as the protest insinuates. I confined myself, in the first place, strictly to the *Special Report*; and in the second place, closely to one paragraph of that report, printed as No. 2 in the Gazette, reading it from the print. I had read precisely *one inch and three quarters* by actual measurement, during over an hour's patient and protracted effort to go on under the ruling of the Moderator. I sought to read nothing else, and I will read now just what I read then. (Here read.) This is all, sir. There is nothing else in that report that touched the question in hand. It is therefore untrue that I was indulging in "unlimited reading," or that the Moderator called me to order on that account. (3.) All Mr. McCune's objections and interruptions were directly to the point, that I had *no* right to read that part of the report which the Moderator ruled I *had* a right to read, in order to show that the Committee was as much bound to prosecute Mr. McCune as I was. (4.) I was never called to order once by the Moderator, or as ruled out of order. The Moderator's remarks, that I would confine myself to the question and the paper, were remarks made in the midst of boundless confusion, *not as calls of myself to order*, but as simple repetitions and assurances to the court that, in what I should say and read, I must confine myself to the paper and to the question, both which I did, not that I had transgressed in a single instance. (5.) The inch and three quarters that I did read was germane to the matters involved in the motion under discussion, as the whole para-

graph was, and this I was proceeding to show, but was prevented by persistent interruptions, which were not restrained. They coincided with "the particular matters" complained of, but I was not allowed to go on and show this fact. (6.) The drawer of the Report affirmed to me personally, in my study, after the Presbytery was over, that I had a perfect right to read that whole paragraph, which is six inches long in print, and that I ought to have been allowed a still larger range. It is not true, therefore, as I have shown, that I sought an "unlimited" range, or that I was out of order, or that I wandered from the question, or that I did anything not pertinent to the discussion, or that I trespassed the ruling of the Chair, or that my conduct gave any just ground for the unlawful interruptions to which I was subjected, or that in nearly or quite every instance, the Moderator found it necessary to warn me to keep within his ruling, all which the answer to the protest alleges as true, and the contrary of which I allege. The simple fact is this, the determination on the part of several individuals was, that that part of the Committee's report which I was reading should not be read and I was forced to retire, under protest that I was not protected in my rights. And now, in face of such allegations as the above, in the answer to the protest, it must be evident to every one, that *no withdrawal* of my protest by myself, could make it "more agreeable" to my "views" or to the facts in the case, or to my vindication against the false impeachments of the answer, by any alteration that I might make, and therefore my only resort is, to complain to this body against the injustice that has been done.

And thus do I sum up the whole case of which I complain: A case of grievous injustice against a man who has simply sought to draw the notice of his Presbytery, in these days of demoralization in this region, to endangering error and practice, under the disguise of a false unionism and liberalism, which repels the distinctive tenets of our creed, and the enforcement of denominational law. Injustice in violation of my constitutional and parliamentary rights, both which have been twice wrested from me on the floor of the Presbytery, bound to protect me in the same; injustice in accepting the Committee's Report, which opens with, and rests upon, three separate statements of untruth; injustice in seeking to make me the author of the "rumors" which, "in time past," had spread over the country, before even my pamphlet was born; injustice in turning aside to institute a new case, and pronounce on the basis of those untruths a censuring judgment against me personally, as also against the public defense of my rights as a Presbyterian, and of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church; injustice in asserting that I was under moral obligation either to

“prove or retract;” injustice in recommending a judicial investigation of certain selected statements, on Mr. McCune’s representation alone, as if my quotations or argument were false on that account; injustice for suggesting a prosecution for “slander” in case I declined to accede to the imputation in the judgment, that I ought to “prove or retract;” injustice in accepting collaterals to the report, and making them official documents, when they abounded in gross personalities and multiplied vituperative epithets, not tolerated even in the councils of unconverted men; injustice in representing me as a persistent breaker of the order of my Presbytery, a constant trespasser upon the ruling of the Chair, and the author of the very disorder and confusion under which I was forced to retire from the floor of the Presbytery; a twelve-fold injustice, repeated, protracted, accumulated, and which I here bring and lay before the bar of this Synod, and upon which I ask the judgment of my brethren, and all this injustice, oppression and wrong, in an effort to avoid and delay the bounden duty of the Presbytery, to attend to the disorders which, by common fame, had been circulated through the country.

But, Moderator, high over all personal injustice and wrong, looms the great question of the Episcopal or Paternal Power of the Presbytery to condemn error in doctrine and practice, apart from judicial process, and so conserve the faith and order of the Church. This power, expressly vested in the Presbytery, and in all our courts, by Christ, the Head of the Church, and engraved in the constitution itself, Cincinnati Presbytery has repudiated. It is a dangerous relapse. To the Presbyterian Church, to-day, as ever, belongs the whole power of the apostolic Church, save its miraculous and extraordinary to oversee and govern the flock of God, a plenary power administered in fidelity centuries before our forms of “actual process” were recorded. To each minister of the Presbyterian Church belongs the whole ordinary power of the apostles, to watch, govern and direct, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all, long suffering and doctrine, apart from judicial forms. Who will say that the Presbytery has not the inherent power which belongs inherently to each minister and elder who composes it? Sir, it is more than a fallacy to say that the doctrine and order of the house of God can not be protected under our constitution, except by forensic process. The prophets contradict it. The New Testament contradicts it. The apostolic example contradicts it. The practice of the Church in every age contradicts it. Every apostolic epistle is a loud protest against it. The history of the Presbyterian, and every other Evangelical Church in Christendom, contradicts it. And woe to the Church of Christ, the

day when she puts herself at the mercy of every tenacious inventor of doctrine, or every reviver of heresies exploded a thousand times, who makes use of her standards to shackle her freedom, and dares her to move one step in vindication of her creed, unless at the expense of perpetual judicial war. Sir, my heart and my head alike are in this great matter; I want to save the anchor. I would have my brethren pause, in this our great Church, whose limits extend so wide, and remember that maxim consecrated by so much illustration: "TIMES OF UNION ARE TIMES OF PERIL FOR THE TRUTH." And I would have them consider, too, the significance of that other maxim, printed so clearly and legibly on the page of church history, viz.: "That every schismatic demands a trial!" But, Moderator, if the genius of our constitution is eminent in anything, it is in this, that the mission of the Church is to bear testimony to the truth of Christ, and that it is the bounden duty of the Presbytery, apart from forensic forms, to condemn errors in doctrine and practice, under its own jurisdiction, which injure the unity, peace and purity of the Church. The failure to do this was the source of either increasing corruption on the one hand, by reason of neglect, or of perpetual war on the other, by reason of effort herein. First and last, it is the "heavenly doctrine" and "heavenly order" we prize above all. Condemn the error in doctrine and the irregularity in practice by the episcopal power vested by Christ in the ministry of His Church. Rebuke and exhort, *admonish* and warn. *Enjoin* all not to propagate what is fatal to truth and order. If contumacy follows, the remedy is at hand, without years of contention, agony, resistance, and regret.

Moderator and brethren, I thank you; I feel I have discharged a sacred duty to God, to my Church, to Christ, to you, in bringing this matter before you. My conscience is at rest. My heart beats warm in hope that God will bring good out of this contest. Were it in my hand to do it, I would arrest every unnecessary judicial process for false doctrine, everywhere, and I would call upon every court of the Lord Jesus to stand to its responsibility in the exercise of legitimate episcopal power, condemning erroneous opinions and practices, so preserving to the Church her noble polity and creed, and, at the same time, her unity, purity and peace.

PROTEST.

"To the Synod of Cincinnati:

"DEAR BRETHREN—The undersigned hereby protests against the action of the Synod of Cincinnati, taken at its annual session, October 23, 1876, in adopting the following preamble and resolutions, to wit:

“WHEREAS, The issuing of the complaint of Dr. Skinner, as recommended by the Judicial Committee, *may* prejudice the case now known as the McCune case, at present pending before the Cincinnati Presbytery; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the *consideration of the report of the Judicial Committee* upon the said complaint of Dr. Skinner, be and is hereby *postponed* until the issue of the case of Mr. McCune by said Presbytery.”

My reasons for this protest, are :

“1. Because my rights to a present hearing upon the merits of my particular case, which I have closely and carefully discriminated from any possible relation to the possible case of Mr. McCune, not yet framed, and belonging to another court, is guaranteed to me by the provisions of the constitution, all the conditions necessary as to this having been by me fulfilled.

“2. Because the argument of the Preamble, that the present hearing of my complaint in this court, utterly distinct from a case not yet framed, nor presented to another and lower court, would be just as good in the lower court against the hearing of Mr. McCune’s case, when it shall be presented, if any such connexion exists between them as the Preamble assumes. Each case must stand upon its own merits, and each court must judge for itself.

“3. Because the Synod had no official knowledge of my complaint, while its character was misrepresented by individuals, the complaint itself never having been so much as read, and equally, has no official knowledge of the case, yet to be, of Mr. McCune. The Judicial Committee, in neither of its reports, either described my complaint, or made a solitary quotation from it.

“4. Because the Judicial Committee had unanimously reported that my complaint was ‘in order,’ and had been regularly conducted, and recommended that it be taken up by the Synod, and the Synod voted to take up my complaint.

“5. Because even a refusal to consider the Judicial Committee’s ‘report,’ as the resolution has it, and which declared that my complaint was ‘in order,’ is not only a refusal by the Synod to hear now my complaint, and to which hearing I have a perfect right, but is a refusal to decide, even now, *whether there is any complaint at all by me regularly in order before this body, and entitled now to be heard.* It was a practical ejection of my complaint from the Synod.

“6. Because it is a repetition, now the third time during six months, of the very thing of which I complain to this body as previously twice practiced upon me in the court below, viz: The setting aside of my present constitutional rights by the exercise of an assumed discretionary power, excluded by the provisions of the constitution itself in all cases where such rights are involved.

“For these reasons I respectfully protest, and give notice of complaint to the General Assembly.

“Yours fraternally,

“THOMAS H. SKINNER.”

“LEBANON, O., Oct. 24, 1876.”

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

To the Moderator of the Synod of Cincinnati :

"The undersigned hereby respectfully gives notice of his complaint to the General Assembly, against the following action of the Synod of Cincinnati, October 23, 1876, to wit :

"WHEREAS, The issuing of the complaint of Dr. Skinner, as recommended by the Judicial Committee, may prejudice the case, now known as the McCune case, at present pending before the Cincinnati Presbytery; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the consideration of the report of the Judicial Committee upon the said complaint of Dr. Skinner be, and hereby is, postponed until the issue of the case of Mr. McCune by said Presbytery."

"My reasons for this complaint are :

"First, Because the above action excluded the undersigned from a hearing on his complaint to which he was entitled both by constitutional and parliamentary law.

"Second, Because the preamble specifying the ground of the Synod's action offered no good and sufficient showing for setting aside the vested ecclesiastical rights of the undersigned.

"Third, Because such action is an encouragement of insubordination in the lower courts, and is destructive, not only of individual rights, but of the peace, purity, and unity of the Church.

"OCTOBER 27, 1876.

"THOMAS H. SKINNER."

"The undersigned unite with the Rev. T. H. Skinner, D. D., in the above complaint to the General Assembly.

"T. CHARLES THOMAS,	NATHANIAL WEST,
"W. B. SPENCE,	R. H. LEONARD,
"HENRY W. BIGGS,	EDWARD H. CAMP,
"J. GAMBLE,	E. D. LEDYARD.
"L. H. LONG,	

ACTION OF THE SESSION OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

"*Resolved*, that the session of the Second Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, in full sympathy with our Pastor in his efforts to maintain the faith and order of the Presbyterian standards, and to secure respect by the lower courts for vested ecclesiastical rights, unite with him in his complaint to the General Assembly."

"OCTOBER 30, 1876."

"J. BURNET JR., <i>Clerk of Session</i> .	
"JAMES TAYLOR,	WM. H. NEFF,
"WM. H. ALLEN,	S. J. BROADWELL,
"E. H. PENDLETON,	WM. H. MUSSEY."

ACTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

“*Resolved*, That we, the undersigned, Trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, being in full accord and sympathy with our Pastor in his efforts to maintain the faith and order of the Presbyterian standards, and to secure respect by the lower courts for vested ecclesiastical rights, unite with him in his complaint to the General Assembly.

“NOVEMBER 6, 1876.

“WM. WOODS,	JOHN SHILLITO, <i>President</i> .
“GEO. WILSHIRE,	THORNTON M. HINKLE, <i>Sec.</i>
“JOHN A. MURPHY,	A. S. WINSLOW.”
“G. P. GRIFFITH,	

ACTION OF THE DEACONS.

“*Resolved*, That the Deacons of the Second Presbyterian Church, of Cincinnati, in full sympathy with the Session, the Trustees and the Pastor, do cordially unite with the Pastor in the above complaint to the General Assembly.

“D. B. LUPTON,
 “H. P. LLOYD,
 “WM. HUBBELL FISHER,
 “GEO. A. PRICHARD.”

NOVEMBER 6, 1876.

“The undersigned, members and Elders of other Presbyterian Churches of the city of Cincinnati, also unite in the above complaint.

“F. T. LOCKWOOD,	W. W. SCARBOROUGH,
“FRANCIS FERRY,	H. STEWART,
“ALEX. M. JOHNSON,	GEO. W. McALPIN,
“HUGH MCBIRNEY,	WM. CLENDENIN,
“RICHARD SMITH,	M. W. OLIVER,
“THEO. KEMPER,	IRA. HAYNES,
“JOHN W. CALDWELL,	J. C. BRADFORD.



THE PROCESS,
TESTIMONY AND OPENING ARGUMENT

OF THE PROSECUTION,

VOTE AND FINAL MINUTE,

IN THE

JUDICIAL TRIAL OF REV. W. C. McCUNE

BY

THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI,

FROM MARCH 5 TO MARCH 27, 1877.

CINCINNATI:
ROBERT CLARKE & CO., PRINTERS.
1877.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE testimony and the argument in the following pages, in the judicial case of the Presbyterian Church *versus* Rev. W. C. McCune, are published herewith at the earnest solicitation of many Presbyterians, and for the information of those who are interested in the study of the trial. It is only necessary here to mention the following things:

1. That the testimony of the prosecution has never yet appeared—as the testimony for the defense has appeared—in any of the daily or weekly issues of the press, whether secular or religious.

2. That from the beginning to the end of the trial, the testimony for the prosecution remained intact, complete in its integrity, undamaged, and admitted by the defendant. It is to this day undisputed and unchallenged testimony, and it remains for every reader to judge whether it supports the specifications and the charges.

3. The vote of the Presbytery upon each specification and upon both the charges is appended, under each, respectively.

4. With the testimony thus uninvalidated and unbroken, the Presbytery, by a verdict of 29 to 8, declared the charges *not sustained*.

5. Of the specifications, the Presbytery, at the same time, voted that the specifications 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11, under Charge I were *not sustained* by the proofs; and that 6, 7, 8, and 10 were *sustained*. Also, under Charge II, the specification 2 was *sustained*, and specification 1 was *not sustained*.

6. The final minute of the Presbytery, which is printed at the close of the argument, reports specification 10, under Charge I, as *not sustained*, whereas said specification was *sustained* by a vote

of 21 to 17, the law of the assembly being, that to "sustain in part" (9), and to "sustain" (12), are always to be counted together.

7. The Presbytery has decided that nothing taught or done by Mr. McCune, in any or all of the proofs of the case, was in contravention of his ordination vows, nor impaired the integrity of our system of doctrine, nor was disloyal to the Church, nor, if generally persisted in by our ministers, would subvert the Presbyterian denomination.

8. The opening argument of the prosecution is given to the public at the request of many members of our Church, and others not members of the Church.

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

CINCINNATI, *April* 10, 1877.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARGES.

The Prosecuting Committee appointed by Presbytery, October 4, 1876, to take in hand and digest all the papers and documents relating to the case of the Rev. W. C. McCune, and prepare and conduct judicial process upon the same, herewith submit the charges.

They deem it proper to state that they have given diligent attention to the labor assigned them. During the progress of their labors they have been deeply impressed with the gravity of the case, not alone in relation to the defendant, but also to the Presbytery itself and to the whole Presbyterian Church. In all cases of prosecution where "Common Fame" is the accuser, "the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America" is the "prosecutor," appearing in defense of its peace, purity, and unity by its "Committee of Prosecution" acting in its name, and duly appointed by a court of legitimate jurisdiction, before whom the cause is to be originally tried. The Presbytery, jealous of its solemn attitude and function as a court of impartial adjudication, and detaching itself from the Committee of Prosecution, thus refusing to assume the attributes of both prosecutor and judge in the premises, acts purely in a judicial character, and intrusts the whole conduct and course of the case to the Committee of Prosecution. Such is the provision of our General Rule XLII. Rule XLI was expressly originated in the year 1819 to be applied to references, complaint and appeal cases before the

General Assembly (Digest, 214), and afterward extended in 1822 to cover all such cases in the lower judicatories as well, but not applicable to the institution of original process, as is shown by Rule XLII, enacted at the same time. By this Rule the Presbytery's Committee of Prosecution is, *ipso facto*, disfranchised from the bench of judgment by the Presbytery's own act, and thrown upon their own responsibility for the management of the whole case. Under a sense of this responsibility thus laid upon them, the prosecution, as representing the Presbyterian Church, its constitution and laws, have felt that nothing should be done which the Presbyterian Church forbids, and all should be done that the Presbyterian Church requires, and also that, in the Spirit of the Gospel and the "Book," every advantage possible to be accorded to the defendant, consistent with justice, should be scrupulously ascertained and liberally bestowed, though going beyond what strict justice itself might claim. The offense charged, therefore, is presented as one in its general nature, precisely as made by "General Rumor" itself, viz: Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church, assuming a two-fold form, precisely as it assumed in the same "Rumor," the first relating to the doctrines, principles, and views of the defendant, this being Charge I; the second relating to the practical course of the defendant, this being Charge II. The description of the offense, moreover, has followed the language of the Presbytery's resolution of April 13, 1876, at Glendale, and the Title of the "Special Report" of Presbytery's Investigating Committee, accepted at Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876. The Specifications under the first charge are eleven in number; under the second charge, two. The Committee confined themselves entirely to a plain, direct, and unambiguous statement of what the matter of fact in the papers and writings of the defendant will, in their judgment, jus-

tify. Still further, in order to give the defendant the utmost possible advantage, as well as reduce the case and save the time of Presbytery, they have agreed to present the whole case of the prosecution in one paper at this time. To this end they have not restricted themselves to a simple *reference* to the objectionable language in the writings of the defendant, merely noting the page and sentences or paragraphs, but have furnished to the defendant the language itself, upon which they rely to support the several Specifications. They have given the name and page of the document, and the date as to year, month, and day, thus basing the several allegations upon the words of the defendant himself, these being again supported in part by other testimony, including the testimony of the Presbytery's Committee of Investigation in their special report. If there is seeming redundancy, it is not because the evidence is exhausted, but only that no injustice may be done the defendant, and that Presbytery itself may be satisfied on this point, inasmuch as the testimony is the essence of all judicial cases. In the same interest of advantage to the defendant, the Committee have annexed to each Specification the several *references* to the Standards of the Church with which they deem the views and course of the defendant to be in conflict. Thus the defendant is furnished in advance with the whole testimony of the prosecution and all the law points in the case. Every advantage the Committee could give has been given; every right carefully guarded; every benefit readily accorded. The Specifications are appended to support the Charges, the Proofs are added to support the Specifications, and the references to the Standards are subjoined to support the fact that the matter charged is an offense against the Presbyterian Church. The prosecution have no personal witnesses to cite. The evidence is entirely documentary. The testi-

mony and the law are given with the Charges. The Committee desire to add that they have made application to the officers of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church for access to their official records relating to the organization of the Church, but said officers have declined to accede to their request.

With this explanation, and the statement that the Prosecuting Committee, after careful examination and deliberation, have come to a united judgment upon the presentation of the charges, specifications, testimony, and law of the case, we respectfully submit the case to the Presbytery, and ask that it may be prosecuted according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church.

THOMAS H. SKINNER,

E. D. LEDYARD,

S. J. THOMPSON,

Committee of Prosecution.

CINCINNATI, *December* 18, 1876.

JUDICIAL PROCESS.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

versus

THE REV. W. C. McCUNE,

IN THE COURT OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI.

Action brought by Common Fame, for Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church.

Process instituted by Presbytery.

Rev. Messrs. THOMAS H. SKINNER AND E. D. LEDYARD AND
Elder S. J. THOMPSON, Prosecuting Committee.

Offense: Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church.

CHARGE I.

That the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a minister of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has, for years past, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive faith and order of the Presbyterian Church, as also in opposition to the terms of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical Basis of union adopted, unanimously, by the Presbytery of Cincinnati (O. S.), at Avondale, September 8, 1869, Mr. McCune being present and voting for the same, and adopted by the whole Presbyterian Church (O. S. and N. S.), and in joint convention November 12, 1869, declared as of binding force, openly proclaimed and persistently advocated doctrines, principles, and views, not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but, if generally accepted,

totally subversive of its constitution and of the very existence of the Presbyterian denomination itself.

This Charge rests upon the following specifications, to wit :

SPECIFICATION I.

Law of Organization.

As to the Divine Law of Organization for the Christian Church.—In this, that the divine Law of Organization for the Christian Church, in all time, is found in Romans xv. 7, and not only forbids the existence of different evangelical denominations, as such, and any exclusion of Christian members or ministers in one denomination from full fellowship in another, but requires oneness of visible external organization, and immediate preparation for the reorganization of the Presbyterian and whole Christian Church on a New Testament basis ; moreover, according to this law, the Church may cut off from its communion no one who is not, first of all, assumed, or proved, to be unregenerate.

PROOF 1.—Christian Unity, December 6, 1873, p. 5 : “ We claim that many express precepts of the New Testament require organic Christian Union. 1. The precept in Romans xv. 7 : ‘ Receive ye one another, even as Christ also received us to the glory of God,’ requires ministers and members everywhere to receive *all* into church relations, whom they acknowledge Christ has received.” Again, Christian Standard, November 13, 1875, p. 362 : “ The great law of Christian Union is tersely and comprehensively expressed, Romans xv. 7 : ‘ Wherefore receive ye one another, etc.’ ” Again, repeated in the Standard, November 20, 1875, p. 370. Again, Declaration from Linwood and Mt. Lookout, p. 4 : “ We are also convinced that we find the law requiring visible Christian Union in Romans xv. 7, as well as in other scriptures : ‘ Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.’ We likewise believe that the precept applies *in the case of ministers*, as well as in the case of members, and that no one who gives scriptural evidence that he is a minister of the Lord

Jesus Christ should be *excluded from* membership in any Presbytery, Conference, or association of ministers whatsoever, by any denominational law." Again, Christian Unity, January 31, 1874, p. 4: "The New Testament *forbids* denominational divisions, and *requires* visible union." Again, Christian Unity, January 3, 1874, p. 4: "Christ prayed for such oneness as *necessarily* involves visible unity." Again, Christian Unity, November 15, 1873, p. 4: "God, in his providence, urgently calls upon all Christ's disciples to make *immediate prayerful preparation for a united New Testament organization of the Church in every place.*" Again, Christian Unity, August 1, 1875, p. 5: "And were it not for the active and prejudiced resistance made by *sectarian managers and place-men*, and for the effort always necessary and generally painful, to *pass from an old organization that is unauthorized and extra-scriptural to a new one on a New Testament basis*, there is a great host of living Christian hearts, now separated by mere human sectarian walls, that would gladly unite to-morrow on the basis of the *unity of the spirit with forbearance in love.*"

PROOF 2.—Christian Unity, March 14, 1874, p. 4: "The Apostles received all Christians into the fellowship of the Church. They *never excluded a disorderly person* in order that he *might organize another denomination.*" Again: "Report on Christian Union, read in the Presbyterian Synod of Cincinnati, October 22, 1870, and ordered to be printed," W. C. McCune, Chairman of Committee, p. 14: "It may indeed be needful that he should be made the subject of some brotherly forms of discipline, of admonition, of reproof, or even of temporary suspension, but *he may not be finally excommunicated and forced to establish another denomination of his own, in order to attain membership in the visible Church of Christ.*" Again, p. 12: "Paul gave directions to exclude incestuous persons from the communion of the Church, *but not with the view to the establishment of another denomination in which incest should be ruleable and respectable.*" Again, Organic Union, p. 74: "He (Dr. P.) assumes that the 'brother' in the text (2d Thess. iii. 6), was a Christian brother, and that *as a Christian brother* he was to be

excluded from the Church; and the inference is that it can not be the law of the Church that the *mere evidence* that a man is a *Christian* brother does not entitle him to membership." Again, p. 74: "It would be *necessary to show* that the Apostles in *some* case had *actually excommunicated* a man who gave evidence that he was a *true believer*. But there is no such case on record. There is no proof whatever that the 'brother' mentioned in the precept above was a brother Christian."

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 45 (2), 307 (b), 674 (iii, 1, 2), 675 (5, 6), 676 (7), 677 (10), 678; 44 (ii, v, vi), 48 (i), 49 (vi), 50 (b), 54 (11, 12), 57 (14), 63 (2), 92 (ii, 2), 91 (2), 120 (i), 147 (5), 169 (8, c), 191 (iv), 620 (7). Also the whole Form of Government and Book of Discipline in their structure, captions, and provisions, and all the decisions of the approved Digest bearing upon the reception or exclusion of ministers and members, particularly the references in Digest Index, p. 709, under "Excommunication;" Title, Censure, and Digest, pp. 679 to 681, 704 (2), 85 (4), 73; also Princeton Review, January, 1876, p. 39.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Not sustained.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Ritchie, Camp, Dudley, Beecher, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Jones, White, Morris, Hills, Schwenck, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—25.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, Leonard, Babbitt, West, Wright, Winness, Gamble—8.

Sustained in part.—Kumler, Morey, Monfort, Evans—4.]

SPECIFICATION II.

Anti-denomination.

As to the essential sinfulness of the Presbyterian and all other existing evangelical denominations as such.—In this, that the Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations, as

such, *i. e.*, in their peculiar character as distinct organizations, apart from their common Christianity, and framed by denominational law to maintain and enforce their peculiar and distinctive creed as to doctrine and polity, are essentially sinful, are not churches, and have no scriptural right to exist.

PROOF 1.—Organic Union, p. 123: “A denomination has *no right to exist* as a distinct organization, unless she is organized *according to the divine law of organization*.” Again, Christian Unity, November 15, 1873, p. 4: “We shall aim to show the *anti-scriptural*, wasteful, and enfeebling nature of existing denominational divisions, and to persuade Christians, eventually, to *organize, instead, but one church* in one place.” Again, Christian Unity, January 31, 1874, p. 8: “Denominational divisions in the church are *wholly destitute of scriptural authority*.” Page 4: “We have a clear, profound conviction that denominational divisions are *unscriptural*.”

PROOF 2.—Cincinnati Commercial, February 11, 1876: “I am opposed to *denominationalism*, or, to use a more expressive term, I am utterly opposed to all *sectarianism*, and I am just as much opposed to *Presbyterian* sectarianism as any other. Denominational Christian Churches are characterized by two things: first, their *Christianity*; secondly, their *sectarianism*. On account of the first, I maintain they *have a right to exist*. The second thing, their sectarianism, is *sinful, unscriptural*, and has *no right to exist*.” “Sectarianism is a hurtful excrescence.”

PROOF 3.—Commercial, February 11, 1876: “Dr. Skinner’s second statement, that I claim I am opposed ‘only to *supernumerary churches*, in small towns or villages’ is wholly untrue. I never said so. I am opposed to dividing of the Church into *denominations* out of which they grow.” “I condemn sectarianism as *essentially sinful* and do not rejoice in it.” “I do not believe that the Presbyterian Churches are Christian Union organizations. I believe they *ought* to be. I believe that as the Presbyterian Church receives all, as *members*, whom she believes Christ receives, so she should receive all as *ministers*, whom she believes

Christ receives. I believe that any minister, on application, should be received as a member of Presbytery, and who gives to Presbytery satisfactory scriptural evidence that Christ has received him, as His minister. *The Presbyterian Church requires more than this.*" Again, Declaration, p. 4: "We further maintain that, if Christians, living in any place, unite themselves together as a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, receiving *all* as *ministers*, and as *members*, who give scriptural evidence that Christ has received them, such a Church is *not a sect*, in any sense whatever. A *sect* is an organization that *cuts off*, or *excludes*, from its fellowship those whom Christ confessedly receives. But the Church that *welcomes all* who give credible evidence that they belong to Christ, *can not be a sect.*"

PROOF 4.—Christian Standard, February 26, 1876, p. 66: "The leading Protestant denominations all have their peculiarities, which they hold not merely as individual belief, but which they profess to *enforce* as denominational law." . . . "It is evident that the *sin* of sectarianism does not consist in the open, candid statement of what their sectarian organic laws are, but on the *actual enactment and enforcement* of these sectarian laws." "It frequently occurs that churches that frankly avow their peculiarities, *in a creed*, in the lapse of time cease to *enforce* them. *The Presbyterian Church has ceased to enforce Infant Baptism.*" Again, Christian Standard, March 4, 1876, p. 74: "The mischief does not lie in the open, manly publication of sectarian terms of fellowship, but in the actual *holding and enforcing of them.*"

PROOF 5.—Commercial, May 10, 1876: "It follows that the Presbyterian, Lutheran and Methodist denominations, taken as a whole, do not either of them constitute a *Church*, using the word in the singular number, but it would be heartily conceded that the *congregations* of believers of which these denominations are composed, is, *each one*, a Church." Again, Christian Standard, September 18, 1875, p. 298: "It is well known that I publicly maintain that the Presbyterian Church does *not* occupy Christian Union ground, and that I seek to persuade her to occupy that

ground, just as I would the Disciples." Again, Gazette, January 12, 1876: "I regard her (the Presbyterian Church) with no popish veneration. I do not consider her standards infallible. I deem it lawful to propose *revision*. . . . I regard it as perfectly ruleable in the Presbyterian Church to propose *changes in her standards in the interest of Christian Union*, to memorialize the General Assembly *to this end*, and to seek to *imbue the whole denomination* with the doctrines of the New Testament on the subject of Christian Union."

PROOF 6.—Organic Union, p. 11: "The Romish Church teaches all the children in her schools that the true Church is organically one, and that she is one while the Protestant Church is divided; she is therefore the true church. *And we too admit that the true Church should be thus united.*"

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 44 (ii, v, vi), 45 (2), 50 (b), 54 (11, 12), 57 (14), 91 (2), 120 (i), 147 (5), 191 (iv), 620 (7), 623 (3, 4).

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Not sustained.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Ritchie, Camp, Beecher, Kumler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, White, Morris, Hills, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—24.

Sustained.—Lichtenstein, Long, Leonard, West—4.

Sustained in part.—Babbitt, Dudley, Wright, Winness, Jones, Monfort, Gamble, Dallas—8.]

SPECIFICATION III.

Creeds.

As to the sinfulness of Framing and Requiring Assent to Human Creeds.—In this, that everything distinctive in creeds should be given up, or struck out, and no human inference or deduction from divine truth be allowed; that the Bible itself is an all-sufficient and the only proper creed for

all time; that the construction of an extended creed, beyond the Scripture statement of a *few* leading doctrines, the most, otherwise discordant, will accept, is a usurpation of the divine prerogative, and the enforcement of distinctive tenets upon the official ministry an oppression of the conscience.

PROOF 1.—Organic Union, pp. 48, 49: “As they (the Apostles) demanded of applicants for membership a *saving* faith in Christ, which necessarily included all other saving graces, and *thereby excluded all fatal heresies*, when this demand was actually met, so this demand, made now and met now, will now in like manner *exclude all fatal heresy*. If a brief and simple creed, embracing *a few of the leading fundamental* doctrines of the Bible, was sufficient then, so it is sufficient now. If it most wisely guarded *against perversions of Scripture* then, so it will now. If it most *effectually excluded heresy* then, so it will now. It is evident that an argument to prove the necessity for *enlarging* the creed, based on present perversions of Scripture, and the prevalence of error, is as weak as it is popish.” Again, same page: “Unblushing assumption of prerogative in the Protestant Church.” Again, p. 115: “Could not the Church of Rome be built on this foundation? Wherein does this principle differ from the rotten basis on which she stands?” Again, pp. 37, 38: “If he (Dr. P.) meant simply to affirm that the *whole Church of the living God, including all, of every name*, who give satisfactory scriptural evidence that they are born of the Spirit and all *true disciples of Christ*, would have the right to put in her creed *her* interpretation of *every truth* of the Bible, concerning which they could *unanimously* agree, this creed would be a *Catholic creed*, neither would it *oppress any Christian’s conscience*, nor *exclude* any true disciple from the Church, or from the Lord’s table.” Again, p. 47: “No true Protestant needs to be convinced of the *falsity* of every argument which is framed to prove that it has become necessary to *enlarge* the creed of the primitive church.” Again, Cincinnati Gazette, January 12, 1876: “Christian Union does not require the *surrender* of any peculiarities,

either of faith or practice. It simply requires that mere *peculiarities* be *not enforced, contrary to conscience*, as a matter of sectarian law." Again, Christian Unity, Jan. 17, 1874: "Did the Apostolic Church demand assent to the *Presbyterian Confession of Faith*? And if he admits it did not, should we follow apostolic example?" Again, Christian Standard, September 18, 1875: "I maintain that no creed, written or unwritten, should contain *anything that is human*. It should not contain any *human inference or deduction* of any kind whatever. *Everything human in creeds I oppose.*" Again, Christian Standard, February 26, 1876, p. 66: "We affirm that the Bible is the *only proper creed*, and that it is a *sufficient creed* for every church on earth." Again, Christian Standard, August 7, 1875, p. 252: "We affirm most heartily and positively that it (the Bible) is a *sufficient creed*, and the *only true creed*, for all true Christians, and all *ministers*, and all churches." Again, Christian Standard, March 4, 1876, p. 74: "A human creed, in whole or in part, is always objectionable; but is a purely gospel creed objectionable? A sectarian creed is *always mischievous and sinful*, but is a genuine New Testament creed to be condemned?"

PROOF 2.—"Address to all the Christian Ministers and Churches in North America, with Basis of Union," October, 1874, Cincinnati, Rooms of Young Men's Christian Association, p. 5: "In regard to the *ordination and examination of ministers*, the Basis teaches that *no other tests* should be applied than the common faith which Christians have held everywhere, and in all ages of the world, as a common heritage." Again, p. 6: "As to all vexed questions at issue among evangelical believers, concerning *man's relation to God's sovereignty, forms of making religious profession, modes of worship, subjects of baptism, methods of organization, kinds and functions of church officers*, we believe they should all be committed to the broad and free domain of Christian liberty, until God shall, in his infinite goodness, vouchsafe to his church *greater light*." Signed by Mr. McCune and others. Again, p. 17: "Neither do we require any assent to any denominational peculiarity, as a condition

of fellowship." Again, "Address to all," etc., p. 17: "We distinctly disclaim all intention to require an assent to *any human modification of these Scriptures, or any human inferences therefrom*, and we affirm it to be our purpose *only* to require an *assent* to God's own truth, *expressed in God's own language*, as it has been commonly received by all Christ's ministers and people in all times, and in all places." Again, Linwood and Mt. Lookout Basis, etc., "Preliminary Statements," November, 1875, p. 5: "We deem it wise and practicable, and at the same time both unsectarian and evangelical, to select *the truths held in common* by evangelical ministers, as *proper tests of soundness in the faith* on the part of those who ask our recognition as ministers of Christ. The *Basis of the world's evangelical alliance* is a statement of this *common faith*." Again, p. 9: "*The Evangelical Ministerial Association of Cincinnati* has also, on two occasions, made a statement of *this common faith* of all evangelical ministers."

PROOF 3.—Christian Unity, March 28, 1876: "Mr. Frost's proposition. (1.) Agree to adopt and practice *whatever we mutually agree that the Bible teaches*. (2.) Agree to give up and strike out of our respective creeds whatever causes division, and *which we ourselves do not regard as essential* to the truth. (3.) Agree to give up and strike out of our respective creeds *whatever causes divisions among us*, and for which we can not give a plain precept or example in the Word of God." Answer by Mr. McCune. "The first and third of these principles seem to us to be *sound and good*, as far as they go. But we would very much prefer to state the third principle thus, *Agree to strike out of our creeds, as a matter of law, everything which those whom we acknowledge as fellow Christians can not see to be law in Scripture*. That would meet the case and secure union. To the second principle we object most decidedly"—"on account of its vagueness." Again, Christian Unity, Aug. 1, 1875, p. 1, "The plan of organization of the Texas Convention, April 30, 1875, at Somerville." The third principle, (3.) "*That churches of Christ ought to have no authoritative creed or discipline but the Holy Scriptures*." Note by the Rev. Mr.

Melish, co-editor with Mr. McCune. "This plan of organization, it will be noted, is very substantially *like our own*, etc. We therefore claim these good brethren to be *one with us*, genuine lovers of organic Christian unity, on the right platform," etc., etc.

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 45 (2), pp. 54-57, 81-86, 147 (5), 191 (iv), 304 (8), Baird's Digest, 638, Conf. of Faith, chap. i, sec. vi.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was :

Not sustained.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Ritchie, Camp, Dudley, Beecher, Kumler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, White, Monfort, Morris, Hills, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—28.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, West, Wright, Potter.—5.

Sustained in part.—Leonard, Babbitt, Winness, Jones, Gamble—5.]

SPECIFICATION IV.

Vows of Ordination.

" *As to Ordination Vows*.—In this, that Presbyterian ministers, under the obligation of solemn ordination vows, may change the old views of doctrine and polity they approved and pledged themselves to maintain, at the time of their ordination, and preach, publish, and advocate their new views, claiming, meanwhile, that those who object to this should themselves leave the Presbytery, while the advocates of the new views may remain in the body for the sake of good standing, without renouncing their departures from the standards.

PROOF 1.—Christian Standard, September 18, 1875 : "The Presbyterian Church only asks men at their ordination, what their present views are, and never pledges them *not to change* their views."

PROOF 2.—Gazette, August 27, 1875: “ You (Dr. Monfort) seem to suggest that, inasmuch as I am an advocate of organic Christian Union, there is something dishonorable, if not sinful, in my continuance as a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. If the advocacy of Union is an ‘ iniquity to be punished by the judges,’ we ‘ *are at a loss to understand*’ what right you have to be a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati !” “ You could possibly remedy the matter, in so far as you are personally concerned (and I trust that you are the only one that feels aggrieved), by asking yourself for a letter of dismissal, and by uniting with some body of ministers in which there are no Christian Union men, if any such body can now be found.” “ I wish my name to remain on the roll of the Presbytery, *as an indorsement of my standing* as a Christian minister.” “ It is useless to make any intimations to me on this subject. I propose that my name shall stand on the roll of Presbytery as long as I remain in Cincinnati or vicinity !”

PROOF 3.—Organic Union, p. 136 : “ To ask a man *not* to *advocate* what *he* conscientiously believes to be God’s truth, is to ask him to obey *men* rather than God.”

PROOF 4.—Commercial, October 17, 1876 : “ It is proposed that I shall give assurance in writing that I will not further the principles which I am clearly convinced are the truth of God. My inexpressibly solemn obligation, as a minister of Christ, to preach His truth as I believe it in my heart, I am to be required to *renounce*. Presbytery is to be placed in God’s stead over me. She is to be ‘ seated in the Temple of God,’ and to show herself that she is God over my conscience.”

PROOF 5.—Organic Union, p. 150 : “ The writer of these pages can never consent to preach the gospel, in any denomination, upon condition that he shall not advocate *certain principles*, which he believes in his heart are the truths of the gospel. He believes that the *great principles* upon which the Organic Union of the Church must be consummated, are just as important as the salvation of precious souls—as the conversion of the world, for the world will never believe till the Church is one.”

PROOF 6.—Mr. McCune's statement of Christian Union principles, given to Presbytery's Committee of Investigation, and read in Presbytery at Mount Auburn, September 13, 1876. Collateral of the Committee's Report, No. 4, p. 6: "I have publicly advocated, and *propose to advocate*, the following principles on the subject of Christian Union. I make verbatim extracts from a report read in the Synod of Cincinnati in 1870, which was published at that time by the authority of the Synod and widely circulated." See Report, from p. 7 to p. 12, inclusive, and inserted by Mr. McCune in the Collateral above specified; especially this: "We speak not of voluntary usage, of prevailing customs, or of mere recommendations, for *these things* never produce denominational divisions. We speak of *organic enactments*, of *denominational laws*; for it is *these* and *these only*, that divide the Church. *These* are the apples of discord and the wedges of division in the *Christian Church*. *It is these peculiar, distinctive denominational laws* which give visible form and sharp outline, and repellant and perpetuating power to divisions."

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 399 (vii, 2, 3), 410, 411, (2, 3, 6); 45 (2), 48 (2), 49 (vi), 54 (11, 12), 55 (13 b), 57 (14), 191 (iv), 144 (8), 218 (v), 231 (2, 3); Baird's Digest, 662 (88); Moore's Digest, 540 (v); 541 (vi); 548 48 (ii), 223; Baird's Digest, 649 (72), 651 (3, 4); Moore's Digest, 221, 222; Baird's Digest, 664.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Not Sustained.—Caton, Rossiter; Cortelyou, Cushman, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, Wright, Beecher, Kumler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Potter, Morris, Hill, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—31.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, West, Gamble—4.

Sustained in part.—Leonard, Ritchie, Winness—3.]

SPECIFICATION V.

Plurality of Official Membership.

¶ *As to Plurality of Official Membership.*—In this, that Presbyterian and other evangelical ministers may belong at the same time to two different ecclesiastical denominations, antagonistic in their principles, and subscribe allegiance to both.

PROOF 1.—Commercial, February 11, 1876: “I do not believe that the Presbyterian Churches are Christian Union organizations. I believe they *ought* to be.”

PROOF 2.—“Address to all Christian ministers and Churches in North America, with a Basis of Union, p. 6: ‘In this Basis, which we submit to your serious and prayerful attention, we have suggested what we believe must be the *initial* step, viz: to *receive* every Christian *into our fellowship*, and *every Christian minister* who teaches the *common faith* of the gospel; trusting in Divine Providence, that, if we take this step, God will vouchsafe us light and wisdom for the next.’ ‘Brethren, this is an attempt to induce Christians to unite *on the basis of their agreements*, as the experience of centuries has shown that they can not unite on their disagreements.’ ‘We ask every minister, who approves it, to say so, and to accept a cordial invitation to attend the *Christian Union Convention* which is to meet at Suffolk, Virginia, on the first Wednesday of May, 1875, at 10 o’clock, A. M. Signed by W. C. McCune and others. Again, ‘Address,’ etc., p. 19: ‘All ministers and Churches adopting this Basis will be *recognized and enrolled* as Union Christian ministers and Churches, *to be known as the ‘Union Christian Churches of America.’*”

PROOF 3.—“Address,” etc., p. 19: “*Any minister who has adopted this Basis, but does not deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations, shall, at his own request, be enrolled, notwithstanding.* Churches desiring to take action concerning this Basis are requested to give public notice of a meeting for that purpose. When the Church is con-

vened, it is suggested that the Basis be read, and that then a vote be taken on the two following questions: *First*, ‘Do you approve the Union Christian Basis?’ *Second*, ‘Do you adopt the Union Christian Basis?’ All Churches, either approving or adopting this Basis, are requested to send one or more *delegates* to attend a general Convention of the Union Christian Churches, at Suffolk, Va., on the first Wednesday of May, 1875. All *ministers* adopting this Basis, *including those who may not have severed heretofore existing denominational relations*, are also invited to attend the Convention, to take counsel concerning the promotion of Christian Union, and the conversion of the world.” “Unanimously adopted and signed, October 24, 1874, at the Rooms of the Young Men’s Christian Association, Cincinnati, Ohio.” Signed by W. C. McCune, Thomas J. Melish, and others. Again, Christian Unity, August 1, 1875, p. 2: “We do not ask either *ministers or Churches to change their denominational relations*. Therefore, we are not laboring to build up a new sect.” Editorial of Thomas J. Melish, co-editor with Mr. McCune of “The Christian Unity.”

PROOF 4.—“Basis of Fellowship of the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mount Lookout,” Hamilton Co., Ohio, Cincinnati, November, 1875, including “*Declaration*,” pp. 3–6; Preliminary Statements, pp. 6–11; “Basis of Fellowship,” and “Regulations of Expediency,” pp. 11–16. Page 5: “We, giving to each other evidence that we are Christ’s disciples, *propose*, by the help of God, to *organize* a ‘*Union Christian Church*,’ in accordance with the precepts and examples of the New Testament.” Page 6: “We will, on scriptural evidence, cordially receive *all* Christians into the fellowship of this Church.” “We will receive, *as ministers*, *all* who give us scriptural evidence that they are in fact ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ.” “Neither do we deem it practicable to *inquire of a candidate for the ministry* concerning the sense in which he receives every verse of scripture from the beginning of the Bible to the end of it.” Page 10: “Having invited Christian ministers, of *good repute for soundness in the faith*, to aid us and counsel with us,

we deem it sufficient to select from the Bible, for the occasion, the great truths of the gospel concerning which evangelical ministers are agreed, both as to their fundamental character and as to their true sense, *or* that we should use some clear and competent statement of the common faith already prayerfully and deliberately made, such as the Basis of the World's Evangelical Alliance, as the subject of conference *with any whom we are about to send out into the world to preach the everlasting gospel.*" Page 14: "We deem it expedient to elect certain of our number for one or more years, to whom we will especially commit the spiritual oversight of this Church, in conjunction with the pastor (the Rev. Mr. McCune)." "A request of a majority *of the members voting*, at a meeting duly called for that purpose, that an officer shall resign, *must be granted.*" Basis and Regulations, "unanimously adopted at Linwood, November 7, and Mt. Lookout, November 8, 1875."

PROOF 5.—Gazette, January 12, 1876: "Dr. Skinner seems to make a painfully elaborate effort to prove, by some rather confusing quotations, that the Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout is responsible for the publication of the *Declaration and Preliminary Statements* which accompany the *Basis of Fellowship* of the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout. Certainly; who ever thought otherwise? His ulterior object seems to be *to make me also responsible.* I will gladly relieve him of any further trouble in this direction. I hereby declare that I *heartily approve* of the Declaration and Preliminary Statements accompanying the Basis of Fellowship of the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout, and respectfully *commend them* to the attention of the Christian public."

PROOF 6.—Christian Unity, August 1, 1875: "The Christian Unity begins (again) its career with fixed purposes and aims. It will earnestly contend that, in examining *candidates for the ministry*, all tests shall be laid aside except such as develop the faith common to the evangelical family of Christians, etc. Again, Prospectus of the Christian Unity ("monthly"), date near August, 1875: "When earnest practical men propose to obey the Christian Union precepts

of the New Testament, *by organizing an actual visible oneness*, Mr. Thrall joins those who are themselves sectarian and are not ashamed to be in the cry: O, you Christian union men are about to establish a new sect, etc.” Again, Christian Unity, August 1, 1875, p. 2: “We propose to hold an *annual convention*, in different parts of the United States in the month of May, to which we invite *all ministers* who approve *our Basis* to come, and *all Churches* who accept it to send *delegates*.” Again, Christian Unity, August 1, 1875, p. 5: “If the union movement is to prove a success, *we must organize, band ourselves together as ministers and Churches*, advocating with freedom and earnestness *our peculiar principles*. That was meant in New York in October, 1873, at Cincinnati in October, 1874, and at Suffolk in 1875. Let the work of organization go on.” By Rev. W. B. Wellons, co-editor with Mr. McCune. Again, Christian Unity, August 1, 1875, p. 1. The plan of the Texas Convention, at Somerville, April 30, 1875. The third of its principles is: (3.) “That Churches of Christ ought to have no authoritative creed or discipline but the Holy Scriptures.” “This plan of organization it will be noted is very substantially *like our own*, etc. We, therefore, claim these good brethren to be *one with us*, genuine lovers of organic Christian unity on the right platform, etc.”

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 494 (e), 625 (iii, 2, 3, 4), 626 (b), 620 (7), 169 (8).

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain the specification. The vote was:

Not sustained.—Caton, Cortelyou, Leonard, Cushman, Ritchie, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, Wright, Beecher, Kumler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Winness, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Potter, Morris, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—32.

Sustained.—Lichsteinstein, Long, West, Gamble—4.

Sustained in part.—Rossiter, Hills—2.]

SPECIFICATION VI.

Terms of Ministerial Fellowship.

As to the Terms of Ministerial Fellowship.—In this, that no Presbytery has a right by any terms of fellowship to exclude from its ecclesiastical brotherhood, or constituent official membership, any evangelical minister of any other evangelical denomination, but that such minister is, *ipso facto*, entitled to a pastorate in any Presbyterian Church, to a seat in any Presbytery in Christendom, to the exercise of jurisdiction and control in our highest courts, eligible to the chair of instruction in Presbyterian colleges and seminaries, and should be protected in the right of private judgment and free speech.

PROOF 1.—Declaration, p. 4: “*No one* who gives scriptural evidence that he is a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ should be *excluded* from membership in any Presbytery, Conference, or association of ministers whatever, by any denominational law.” Again, Gazette, August 27, 1875: “I believe that *any* Christian minister has a right to membership in any Conference, Association, or Presbytery in Christendom; and when the right is conceded, visible Christian Union can be attained, the Saviour’s prayer answered, and the world saved.” Again, Christian Unity, February 28, 1874, p. 4: “If a Baptist sincerely and intelligently invites me into his pulpit as a minister of Christ, what right has he *to vote me out of his Association?* If a Methodist invites me into his pulpit, what consistency is there *in voting me out of his Conference?* If a Presbyterian invites a Methodist, as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach, in view of the infinite responsibilities of preaching, *how can he refuse him ministerial fellowship* in his Presbytery? Has Christ one standard for gospel ministers and Presbytery another?” Again, Christian Unity, May 2, 1874, p. 4: “Dr. Monfort will say I believe Mr. Baumes is one of Christ’s ministers, but I can never vote to fellowship him as a minister in this Presbytery. I admit he is Christ’s

minister, but *my conscience* will not permit me to receive him as a minister in this Presbytery of ministers, organized according to Christ's authority. Beautiful consistency! Delightful fellowship!"

PROOF 2.—Mr. McCune in "The Church Union" of September 12, 1874, p. 4: "*Every* minister who can give satisfactory evidence that he is one of Christ's ministers, should be received as such in *every* Presbytery, Conference, and association of ministers, as a member in good and regular standing, *entitled to every privilege and eligible to every position which such membership implies.*"

PROOF 3.—"Basis of Fellowship of the *Union Christian Church* of Linwood and Mt. Lookout," November, 1875, p. 13: "We will concede the right of private judgment and liberty of speech alike to all whom we do receive." Again, Organic Union, p. 136: "To ask a man *not to advocate* what *he* conscientiously believes to be God's own truth, is to ask him to obey men rather than God; and if he complies, he places erring sinful man on the throne of the Lord God omnipotent." Christian Standard, April 22, 1876, p. 130: "I do claim the right of private judgment for all men absolutely, without exception." * * * "And further, *any views* a Christian entertains *before* he comes into the Church he has a right to hold and advocate *after* he comes in."

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 399 (vii, 2, 3, 4), 410, 411, (2, 3, 4), 44 (ii), 45 (2), 48 (ii), 49 (vi), 54 (11), 55 (1, 2), 57 (14), 63 (2), 85 (4), 91 (2), 92 (ii, 2), 148 (8), 620 (7), 169 (8), 191 (iv), 218 (v). Cases of Harker, Balch, Davis, Craighead, Barnes.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did ~~not~~ sustain this specification. The vote was:

Sustained.—Lichtenstein, Long, Leonard, Ritchie, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, West, Wright, Maxwell, James, Winness, Jones, Monfort, Potter, Gamble, Conn—17.

Sustained in part.—Caton, Cortelyou, Cushman, Beecher, Kumler, Chidlaw, Chester, Morey, White, Morris, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett—17.

Not sustained.—Rossiter, Hawley, Hills, McGeehan—4.]

SPECIFICATION VII.

Infant Church Membership Denied.

As to the Constituent Membership of the New Testament Church.—In this, that the doctrine of infant church-membership, grounded in the covenant of God with believers, in behalf of their offspring, is to be repudiated as a High-church theory, and that the true definition of the New Testament Church is that it consists of Christians only, believers only—not their children—an assembly or company of the regenerate alone.

PROOF 1.—Cincinnati Commercial, May 9, 1876: “The Presbyterian theory concerning a local Church is expressed in the Presbyterian Form of Government, Chapter II, Section 2: ‘The *universal Church* consists of all those persons in every nation, *together with their children*, who make a profession of the holy religion of Christ and of submission to his laws.’ In Section 4 we have the definition of a local or particular Church, as follows: ‘A particular Church consists of a number of professing Christians, *with their offspring*, voluntarily associated together for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, and submitting to a certain form of government.’ By ‘*professing Christians*’ in this definition, we presume, is meant those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, of repentance, of obedience, of being born again, of being new creatures in Christ Jesus; in a word, those who give evidence that they are *Christians*. But what is meant by the declaration that the ‘*offspring*’ of professing Christians are included in the Church is not so clear.” * * “We believe it may be truly affirmed in fact, and in actual practice, Presbyterians have not corrupted their churches by the admission to practical and efficient membership of a multitude of unbelieving, unconverted children, *although such a theory may still linger among certain High-churchmen*. Neither does the denial of membership to children conflict

with the doctrine of *infant baptism*, unless the sacramentarian dogma is admitted that baptism is the ‘door into the church,’ which not one single text of Scripture affirms.” Again, further on: “It is essential to a local Christian Church that it should be composed of Christians, so far as we are able to judge. Some would add, ‘and also includes their children,’ but this is *not a part of the common faith*.” “*A Christian Church is a Church of Christians, an assembly of believers, a company of regenerate souls.*”

PROOF 2.—Christian Standard, April 22, 1876: “*I utterly repudiate the doctrine of infant church-membership.*” Again, Commercial, October 17, 1876: “It has been said by those hostile to this great principle of Church Union, thus formulated, that it would *exclude all baptised children from church-membership*, who can not give satisfactory scriptural evidence that they are Christians. *I unhesitatingly admit that this is true.*”

PROOF 3.—Christian Standard, February 26, 1876: “*The Presbyterian Church has ceased to enforce infant baptism.*”

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore’s Digest, p. 107 (ii, iv), 108 (2, *a, b, d*), 497, (vi), 671 (ix, i), 705. Conf. of Faith, xxv (ii), xxviii (iv). Larger Cat., Q. 62, 166. Shorter Catechism, Q. 95. Conf. of Faith, xxv (v), xxix (viii).

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs *did* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Sustained.—Lichsteinstein, Long, Leonard, Ritchie, Babbitt, Camp, West, Wright, Beecher, Kumler, Winness, Morey, White, Monfort, Potter, Hills, Gamble, Evans, Dallas, Conn—20.

Sustained in part.—Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Dudley, James, Hawley, Jones, Morris, Schwenk, Kennett—10.

Not sustained.—Caton, Maxwell, Chidlaw, Chester, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Mansfield—8.]

SPECIFICATION VIII.

Admission of Unbaptised Persons.

As to the Admission of Unbaptised Persons to Church Membership.—In this, that unbaptised persons who deny, or scruple to admit, the necessary and perpetual obligation of water-baptism, as instituted by Christ, and the Ordinance of Baptism itself as a covenant sign and seal, and initiatory rite of entrance, for believing adults, into the Christian Church, may, notwithstanding, be admitted to church membership; and that the one condition and requirement for entrance into the visible church is credible evidence of faith in Christ.

PROOF 1.—Christian Standard, April 22, 1876: “I would *vote to receive* any one who can give satisfactory evidence that he is a true Christian, and cheerfully grant him forbearance as a fellow member in the church, *although he has the views of the ‘Friends’ concerning water-baptism.*” Again, Commercial, October 17, 1876: “It has been further stated that this principle (Christian Union) would admit a ‘Friend’ who could give satisfactory scriptural evidence that he was a Christian, but who could not conscientiously be baptised with water. *I admit this also.*”

PROOF 2.—Report of Presbytery’s Investigating Committee; Collateral No. 4, pp. 15, 16: “It has been said, in effect, that this doctrine can not be true, because, if it is, it would admit to church fellowship *every member* of the societies, commonly called Quakers, who can give scriptural evidence that they have been savingly renewed by the Holy Ghost, and who make a credible profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, *and who at the same time deny the perpetual obligation of water-baptism.* I cordially admit that members of the society of ‘Friends’ *can give* this evidence, and that this great principle of church fellowship *would concede to them all the fellowship they will accept.*”

PROOF 3.—Christian Standard, April 22, 1876, p. 130:

“The ‘*Quaker gun*’ never alarmed me. And I have all the time maintained, just as I do now, that faith in Christ is the only New Testament requirement for *membership*.”

“In the exceptional case of a Christian who does not believe in water-baptism at all, his faith in Christ entitles him to membership nevertheless.” Again, *Christian Standard*, Nov. 13, 1875, p. 362: “We maintain that faith in Christ is not merely the great condition, but the *only* condition.”

Again, *Christian Standard*, p. 362: “We add, that when we say that faith in Christ is the ‘one essential condition of entrance,’ we mean that is the *only* condition.”

How contrary to the standards of our Church the above is, see Conf. of Faith, xxviii (i, ii). Larger Catechism, Q. 165, 166, 176. Moore’s Digest, 677 (10) (iv); 678, 129 (4); 430 (5), 671 (ix, i), 674 (iii, 1, 2), 675 (5, 6), 676 (7).

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs *did* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Sustained.—Lichtenstein, Long, Leonard, Ritchie, Camp, West, Wright, Beecher, Kumler, Chidlaw, James, Winness, Morey, White, Monfort, Potter, Hill, Gamble, Evans, Schwenk, Mansfield, Kenuett, Conn—23.

Sustained in part.—Caton, Rossiter, Costelyon, Cushman, Babbitt, Dudley, Hawley, Jones, Morris, Dallas—10.

Not sustained.—Maxwell, Chester, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman—5.]

SPECIFICATION IX.

Saving Faith, What Is It?

As to saving *Faith in Christ and in the Word of God*.—In this, that a person may have true and saving faith in Christ, and in God’s Word, without believing either that Christ was true man or that the Word of God is truly infallible, and that true and saving faith, *ipso facto*, excludes all fatal heresy.

PROOF 1.—*Christian Unity*, January 31, 1874, p. 4: “We believe that a man may be a Christian and *not believe in the infallibility of the Bible*, although ‘almost’ all Christians

do believe the Bible to be infallible.” “We believe that a man may be a Christian and not believe in the *proper humanity of Christ*, although ‘almost’ all Christians do believe that Jesus was *true man* as well as God.”

PROOF 2.—Organic Union, pp. 48, 49: “As they, the Apostles, demanded of applicants for membership *a saving faith* in Christ, which necessarily included all other saving graces, and *thereby excluded all fatal heresies*, when this demand was actually met, so this demand, made now, and met now, will now in like manner *exclude all fatal heresy*.” Again, Christian Unity, January 31, 1874: “Regenerate souls are *all orthodox*.”

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Conf. of Faith, chap. xiv (i, ii), chap. i (v, x), Shorter Catechism, Q. 86; Conf. of Faith, chap. viii (ii); Larger Catechism, Q. 36, 37, 39.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Not sustained.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, Wright, Beecher, Kumler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Morris, Hills, Evans, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—29.

Sustained.—Lichsteinstein, Long, West—3.

Sustained in part.—Leonard, Ritchie, Winness, Potter, Gamble, Schwenk—6.]

SPECIFICATION X.

Time of Advocating His Views.

As to *Persistence in Advocacy of the foregoing Doctrines, Principles, and Views*.—In this, that for many years last past, the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has regularly persisted, as lecturer, editor and pastor, to openly proclaim, publish and advocate, the aforesaid Christian Union doctrines, principles and views; that since the appointment of the Presbytery’s Committee of Investigation, he has continued to do the same in the public secular press, May 9, 1876, before the

Presbytery's Investigating Committee, June 26, 1876, and openly in Presbytery itself, October 4, 1876, and again in the secular press, October 17, 1876, subsequent to the appointment of the Prosecuting Committee; having announced his purpose to pursue in future, as in the past, the advocacy of the same principles of Christian Union.

PROOF.—Commercial, February 11, 1876: "I have been perfectly candid and outspoken on this subject, for *many years*." "I do not believe the Presbyterian Churches are Christian Union organizations. I believe they ought to be." "If the Presbytery is not willing to allow me *the liberty I have enjoyed unquestioned till Dr. Skinner made his attack*, that is a matter for her to determine." Again, Commercial, February 15, 1876: "*I am advocating no sentiments, now, that I have not openly proclaimed for ten years back*." Again, Commercial, May 9, 1876: Article in full, read before "The Evangelical Ministerial Association" of Cincinnati. Again, Collateral No. 4 of the Report of the Presbytery's Investigating Committee, June 26, 1876. Again, Commercial's Report of Presbytery's Proceedings, October 5, 1876. Again, Commercial, Mr. McCune's Protest, October 17, 1876. Again, Collateral No. 4, pp. 20, 21: "I have written largely for the press, secular and religious, as an editor and contributor, *in the last twenty years*." Again, p. 6: "I have publicly advocated and *propose to advocate* the following principles on the subject of Christian Union, etc."

How contrary to the standards of our Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 48 (2), 54 (3), 55 (2), 304 (8), 57 (14); Cases of Harker, Balch, Davis, Craighead, and Barnes.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs *did* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Sustained.—Lichtenstein, Long, Leonard, Cushman, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, West, Wright, Winness, Potter, Hill—12.

Sustained in part.—Caton, Rossiter, Ritchie, Kumler, James, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White—9.

Not sustained.—Cortelyou, Beecher, Maxwell, Chidlaw, Chester, Monfort, Morris, Gamble, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—17.]

SPECIFICATION XI.

Common Fame.

As to the Common Fame in reference to the Whole Charge.—In this, that in addition to evidence involved in the foregoing proofs, attached to the specifications, many newspapers have published articles concerning it, and the Presbytery of Cincinnati appointed a Committee of Investigation, April 13, 1876, “to confer with Mr. McCune and examine into certain rumors touching his loyalty to the Presbyterian Church, and report to the Presbytery.” Said Committee having so conferred and examined, and so reported at Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876.

PROOF 1.—Herald and Presbyter, November 8, 1873; August 18, 1875; January 5, 1876; March 22, 1876. Christian Observer, December 22, 1875; January 19, 1876; January 26, 1876. Journal and Messenger, January 19, 1876; January 26, 1876. Christian Standard, many articles from July 1875 to April, 1876. The Presbyterian Weekly, January 20, 1876; February 3, 1876. Christian Union, January 26, 1876. Cincinnati Gazette, August 27, 1875; December 17, 1875; December 30, 1875; January 11, 12, 21, 24, 25, 1876. Cincinnati Commercial, February 8, 9, 10, 11, 1876; February 5, 1876. Christian News, February, 1876. The Interior, February 10, 17, 26, 1876; March, 2, 16, 1876. Central Presbyterian, February 9, 1876, quoting the United Presbyterian, North-western Christian Advocate, February, 1876. New York Evangelist, March 9, 1876. The Presbyterian, January 19 and 22, 1876; February 12, 1876.

PROOF 2.—Action of the Cincinnati Presbytery, at Glendale, April 13, 1876: “Whereas, for *some time past*, there

have been *current rumors* in regard to the views and course of Rev. W. C. McCune, a member of this Presbytery, involving the question of his *loyalty* to the order of the Presbyterian Church, and whereas, there seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to the subject;

“Therefore, *Resolved*, that a Committee of three ministers and two ruling elders be appointed to have a full conference with Mr. McCune, and to inquire into all the facts bearing on the case and report to Presbytery at the next stated meeting.”

PROOF 3.—Special report of the Investigating Committee of Presbytery, published in Gazette, September 14, 1876: Mr. McCune’s scheme “denies, in effect, the right of every Evangelical Church to testify in favor of any peculiar doctrine of its system, whether Arminian or Calvinistic, Baptist or Pædo-Baptist, Prelatical, Presbyterial, or Congregational. It allows no system of doctrines, no order of worship, no form of government, for it claims union upon what is common to Evangelical Churches, and these churches have in these respects nothing common. They may be said to agree in requiring faith and regeneration, as evidences of conversion, but they may differ widely, and do differ in regard to the nature of faith and the work of the Holy Ghost. The system makes a call to the ministry the only bond of ministerial fellowship in Organic Church Union, while Evangelical Churches differ on the question, what is a call to the ministry. It misinterprets the Savior’s prayer that his people ‘may be one’ as fulfilled only by Organic Church Union. Mr. McCune, with his usual frankness, acknowledges that under his system, which requires that all churches should receive to membership all whom they believe Christ has received, he would admit orthodox Friends who deny the outward rites of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. This does not accord with our standards, which teach that baptism admits the party baptized into the visible church; that it is a great sin to neglect or condemn this ordinance, and that this ordinance is intended to put a visible difference between those that belong to the church and the rest of the world. To us it seems

very plain, that a church without sacraments can not be regarded as a part of the visible church, although true Christians in it may be part of the 'household of faith,' and may have fellowship with any branch of the visible church in prayer and in Christian work. Our assembly has decided that a person having scruples in regard to infant baptism may nevertheless be received to membership in our Church; but this forbearance can not be extended to any one in regard to his own baptism. There are many things that a disciple may learn in regard to duty after his reception into the Church, but his own baptism is essential to his reception and the completion of it, if he has not been baptized in infancy. Any system of Christian Union which contravenes these principles and ignores the command of Christ, 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them,' etc., if held and practiced by our office bearers, must be damaging to the purity and unity of the Church. If we understand Mr. McCune's paper, his views are also erroneous in regard to the relations of the baptized children of believing parents. He professes to believe in infant baptism, but he denies infant membership. The baptism of infants gives them, as he holds, no advantage over the unbaptized in their relation to the Church. He does not admit that they are even minors in the Commonwealth of Israel. This we regard as erroneous, and as bringing infant baptism into disrepute. According to this system, Orthodox Friends may be admitted to the visible Church without baptism, while infants may be baptized and yet have no connection with the Church. Either view is a denial that baptism admits the party baptized into the visible Church, and any one who holds these views can not be expected to teach that it is a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance."

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 499 (iv, v). See also Resolution of Presbytery of Glendale, appointing Committee of Investigation in the case of Mr. McCune, April 13, 1876. Special Report of Investigating Committee, Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was :

Not sustained.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortelyou, Cushman, Ritchie, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, Wright, Beecher, Kunler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Winness, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Morris, Gamble, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—32.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, Leonard, West, Potter—5.

Sustained in part.—Hills—1.]

Note as to the Charge.

Presbytery voted that none of the specifications which they *did* sustain, and none of the proofs under any of the specifications which they did *not* sustain, proved the truth of the matter of this Charge I. The vote was :

Not sustained.—Caton, Cortelyou, Cushman, Ritchie, Babbitt, Camp, Dudley, Beecher, Kunler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Morris, Hills, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn.—29.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, Leonard, West, Wright, Winness, Potter, Gamble—8.

Offense: Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church.

CHARGE II.

That the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a minister of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, and for the publicly avowed purpose of carrying into practical effect the doctrines, principles, and views specified under Charge I, been instrumental in advising, promoting, and encouraging

the new anti-denominational association of the "Union Christian Churches of America;" and, also, the new anti-denominational organization at Linwood and Mount Look-out, founded on these doctrines, principles, and views, his course herein being, if generally allowed, totally subversive of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and of its very existence as a distinctive denomination.

This Charge rests upon the following specifications, to wit:

SPECIFICATION I.

General Association.

As to the "Union Christian Churches of America."—In this, that the Rev. W. C. McCune, during certain years last past, has advocated and promoted the new anti-denominational association of independent "Union Christian Churches of America," by editing the "Christian Unity" in Cincinnati, by lecturing at large upon the subject of organic union, by issuing an "Address to all the Christian ministers and churches in North America with a Basis of Union," by joining himself to this Association, calling upon all in sympathy with the new movement to adopt the basis, enroll themselves in the new association, send delegates to attend its annual conventions, and to advocate the peculiar principles of organic union.

PROOF 1.—The first editorial of the *Christian Unity*, published by Rev. W. C. McCune, Vol. I, No. 1, Cincinnati, November 8, 1873. Also, the three first editorials of the *Christian Unity* (resumed), published by its three joint editors, Revs. W. B. Wellons, D. D., Thos. J. Melish, and W. C. McCune, at Suffolk, Va., and Cincinnati, Ohio, August 1, 1875.

PROOF 2.—See, under Charge I, Specification V, the quotations in Proofs 2, 3, 6.

PROOF 3.—*Christian Unity*, December, 1873, p. 4: "The editor of this paper has for eighteen or twenty years proposed, that when it should seem evident that a fit time had come, he would devote himself to the advocacy of the vis-

ible unity of all true Christians. And he has always supposed that the most efficient instrumentalities for furthering Christian Union were public oral addresses and the press. And when he began, on the eighth of November, to issue this paper, he at the same time began to deliver lectures on the subject of Christian Unity. And now, by request, he will give a brief account of this part of his work. He has spoken at Butler, and Boston, and Newport, in Kentucky; and in Goshen and South Salem, and at Parrot's School-house, and Linden, and in Springfield and Urbana, at Buck Creek Church, and in New Richmond and Hillsboro', in Ohio; and on last Saturday evening he spoke at Madison, near Middletown; on Sabbath morning in the Presbyterian Church in Middletown, of which Rev. J. W. Clokey is pastor; on Sabbath afternoon in a school-house near the village of Astoria; on Sabbath evening in Jacksonburg, in the church of which Rev. J. Emerick is pastor; and on Monday evening in the Baptist Church in Middletown, of which Rev. Mr. Booth is pastor. In all, he has spoken in eighteen different places."

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 304 (8), 44 (ii, v), 411 (3, 4, 6), 399 (vii, 3), 57, 54 (3), 55 (12, 2 and 13 *b*), 93 (10), 95 (32, 1), 96. Baird's Digest, 626, 630, 631, 638, 648, 651, 686, 692. Moore's Digest, 122, 123. Baird's Digest, 704.

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs did *not* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Not sustained.—Caton, Ritchie, Camp, Dudley, Beecher, Kamler, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Morey, Jones, White, Monfort, Morris, Evans, Schwenk, Johnston, McGeehan, Hyndman, Dallas, Mansfield, Kennett, Conn—25.

Sustained.—Lichstenstein, Long, Babbitt, West, Winness, Potter—6.

Sustained in part.—Rossiter, Cortelyou, Leonard, Cushman, Wright, Hill, Gamble—7.]

SPECIFICATION II.

Linwood and Mt. Lookout.

As to the Organization of the Linwood and Mount Lookout Church.—In this, that the Rev. W. C. McCune actively co-operated in organizing, and desired to organize, and agreed with others to organize before and during November, 1875, for the avowed purpose of putting into practice his Organic Union principles, the new organization at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, preparing and commending to the public the Declaration and Preliminary Statements accompanying its Basis of Fellowship, thus promoting a new society which receives all Christians, whether dismissed or undismitted, and all evangelical ministers without exception, provides for the examination of candidates for the ministry, and for sending forth ministers to preach the gospel; and has joined himself hereto, accepting a call and becoming its first pastor, being examined in theology and installed by an irresponsible, because undelegated, Council, and all this without leave of, or dismissal from his Presbytery, and against advice to the contrary, and is, at present, pastor of said society.

PROOF 1.—As to the organization of Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church—Declaration, Basis, Candidates, Ministry—see, under Charge I, Specification V, the quotations in Proofs 2, 4, 5.

PROOF 2.—Joined himself to this Society. Commercial, February 8, 1876: “I pass on to direct attention to the fact that Dr. Skinner’s article abounds in naked assertions. He says: ‘The L. and Mt. L. Society has no ordained officers of any kind whatever,’ etc. Does he deny that *I am an officer*, then, or does he deny my ordination? Which?”

PROOF 3.—Time of Organization. Basis of Fellowship, p. 13. The distinctive title, “Union Christian Church at Linwood and Mount Lookout.” Again, Collateral No. 2, of Presbytery’s Investigating Committee’s Report: “The Church was organized November 8 and 10, 1875.” Again,

Herald and Presbyter, January 5, 1876 : "The Church was established or organized at Linwood, November 7, and at Mt. Lookout November 8." Again, The Presbyterian, February 26, 1876 : "This organization was completed November 24, 1875. The Rev. Mr. McCune, *now* its pastor, was present at the meeting, but did not act *officially*. 'He acted merely in the capacity of a Christian, desiring *that such organization might be effected*, his position as a minister only *giving him somewhat greater prominence in the matter than any other of the brethren*.' Thus testifies one of the members of the Church." Again, Gazette, January 24, 1876 : "I accepted the invitation to preach at Linwood and Mount Lookout *a year* before the Union Church was organized, but it was *mutually agreed* that we should look toward the organization of a Union Church." Again, see, under Charge I, Specification V, the Proof 5. Again, Collateral No. 4, p. 3 : "I did approve of the movement, and after they had sent for me to preach for them, I *counseled and co-operated* with those who did organize this Church."

PROOF 4.—The Presbyterian, February 26, 1876 : "It has been charged that this Church, at its organization, received persons as members who were still members of other Churches and without letters. The fact is, that several of these persons were Baptists or Episcopalians. It was taken for granted that, in their case, to apply for letters would be useless. A few were Presbyterians. These persons should doubtless have pursued a more orderly course. Their coming with the rest on profession was an irregularity." * * "It has been charged that Mr. McCune was a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati at the time of his installation over this Church, and that he had never asked the permission of his Presbytery to form these new relations. Such is the fact, and here is another irregularity."

PROOF 5.—Accepting a call and being installed. Collateral No. 3, p. 2 : "In the second place, the Church further requested the Council to *instal* as its pastor the Rev. W. C. McCune, who had been *unanimously called to that office*." Again, Collateral No. 4, pp. 1, 2 : "I have *accepted the pastorate* of the Union Christian Church at Linwood and

Mount Lookout." Again, Collateral No. 4, p. 4: "*I have violated no Presbyterian law whatever in accepting my present pastorate, nor in anything I have done pertaining to the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout. If there is any Presbyterian law requiring a minister to first gain the consent of his Presbytery before accepting a pastorate outside of Presbyterian jurisdiction, I have no knowledge of it.*" Again, The Presbyterian, February 12, 1876: "Has a Presbyterian minister a right to accept a pastorate outside Presbyterian jurisdiction? Any petty question about the formality of first asking leave may interest hairsplitting ecclesiastical lawyers, whose vocation it is to tithe mint, anise, and cummin. If Presbytery says the *thing done is right*, I will be content. If she says I should have first asked leave, *I will plead ignorance and indifference.*" "And has he a right to advocate such Union, as I do? This might have been a fair question *eight or ten years ago*, in my case, but it is certainly *too late now.*"

PROOF 6.—The Council, Examination, and Installation, Collateral No. 3, p. 1: "The Council was composed of ten ministers, connected with four evangelical denominations. Letters of sympathy were received from several others, who for various reasons were unable to be present. Those in attendance were *not delegated by any ecclesiastical bodies*, but came *simply as individuals* upon the invitation of the Church, in accordance with a familiar Congregational usage. They consequently did not assume, in any sense, to represent their respective denominations, but acted *entirely on their own responsibility as Christian men.*" Again, Gazette, December 17, 1875: "After a full *examination* as to his doctrinal soundness, and his motive in undertaking the pastoral office in connection with this Church, it was

"*Resolved*, That we recognize in Rev. W. C. McCune an intelligent and thoughtful expositor of the Scriptures, and a reliable teacher on all vital points of doctrine," etc., etc.

"The installation of Rev. W. C. McCune took place at half-past seven o'clock, in Linwood Hall, before a large number of citizens of Linwood, according to the programme adopted at the Council in the afternoon."

PROOF 7.—Against advice. Letter of Rev. Thomas H. Skinner to Rev. W. C. McCune:

CINCINNATI, December 11, 1875.

Rev. W. C. McCUNE:

My dear Brother—Your invitation to me, to take part with others in the recognition of the “Union Christian Church,” at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, reached me this morning. I must decline its acceptance. My reasons for so doing I can not now state in detail; yet a few things I will say, which, I think, will sufficiently reveal my views. I am a Presbyterian minister, and owe my standing and protection to the Presbyterian organization. I received ordination, and have retained it, because I solemnly and publicly received and adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, approved of the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States, and promised to be *zealous* and *faithful* in maintaining the purity and peace of said Church. I do not think that by taking part in the services to which I am invited, I would evince either zeal or fidelity in maintaining the *purity* and *peace* or the *unity* of the Church. The principles involved in your organization would, if I understand them, be destructive of the Presbyterian Church, were they successfully and generally carried out. Marching as I do under the banner of this Church, and sacredly pledged as I am to “*study* its peace, unity, and purity,” I can not reconcile it with my conscience or sense of honor to put my imprimatur on your course while you are still a member of the Presbytery. Our General Assembly has declared that “it is not the prerogative of a minister of the gospel to organize Churches without the previous action of some Presbytery directing or permitting it;” the exceptions made having no reference to such a case as that of the Linwood Church. (Moore’s Digest, p. 173.) Had I thought and felt as you have done on the subject of Church polity and creeds, before I acted in the organization of a Church in the bounds of the Presbytery and yet out of its jurisdiction, I would have dissolved my connection with the Presbytery, and so have

been released from my vows of fealty and service to the Presbyterian Church. I know you will pardon me this frank expression of my views.

Faternally yours,

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

PROOF 8.—Pastor now. See Minutes of the General Assembly for 1876, p. 233. Also, Records of Presbytery of Cincinnati, Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876.

How contrary to the standards of the Church the above is, see Moore's Digest, p. 173, 107 (1, *a*), 57 (14), 409 (ix), 416 (i, ii); 107 (1, *b*); 169 (8, *c*, *d*); 416 (i), 409 (ix); 417 (iii); 418 (iv), 149 (10, 12); 616 (i), 619 (4).

NOTE.

[Presbytery voted that the foregoing proofs *did* sustain this specification. The vote was:

Sustained.—Lichsteinstein, Long, Leonard, West, Winness, Potter, Gamble—7.

Sustained in part.—Caton, Rossiter, Cortleyou, Cushman, Babbitt, Dudley, Wright, Maxwell, Chidlaw, James, Chester, Hawley, Jones, Hills, Schwenk, Dallas, Kennett, Conn—18.

Not sustained.—Ritchie, Camp, Beecher, Kumler, Morey, White, Monfort, Evans, Johnston, McGechan, Hyndman, Mansfield—12. Excused—Morris.]

In conclusion, as stated in the preceding Charges, the views and course of the Rev. W. C. McCune are in contravention, to wit:

1. Of his ministerial vows. Digest, p. 410, xii (2), (3), (4), (6); p. 399, vii (2), (3), (4). Installation of Rev. W. C. McCune, at Lincoln Park Church. See Records of Presbytery.

2. Of the terms of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical Basis of Union adopted by the Cincinnati Presbytery (O. S.), Avondale. See Records of Cincinnati Presbytery (O. S.), September 8, 1869. Digest, p. 91, ii, iii; p. 92, ii.

3. Of the Rev. W. C. McCune's vote adopting said Basis at said Presbytery. See Record of vote in Cincinnati Presbytery (O. S.), September 8, 1869.

4. Of the Basis of Union adopted by the whole Presbyterian Church, O. S. and N. S., and declared adopted in Joint Convention at Pittsburg, Pa., November, 12, 1869. See Digest, p. 95 (32), (33), p. 96 (33), (34).

Respectfully submitted by the Presbytery's Committee of Prosecution.

THOMAS H. SKINNER,
E. D. LEDYARD,
S. J. THOMPSON,
Committee.

Note as to the Charge.

Presbytery voted that neither the second specification, which it *did* sustain, nor any of the proofs under either of the specifications, the first of which it did *not* sustain, proved the truth of the matter of this Charge. The vote was the same as on the foregoing Charge, except that the Rev. Mr. Wright voted *not sustained*, and the Rev. Mr. Babbitt voted *sustained*.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CASE.

I. The two general Charges, or rather one Charge in two-fold form.

II. The Specifications under each Charge to support the same.

III. The Proofs under each Specification.

IV. The References to the Standards as contravened by Mr. McCune's teachings and course.

V. The reference to the ministerial Vows of Mr. McCune.

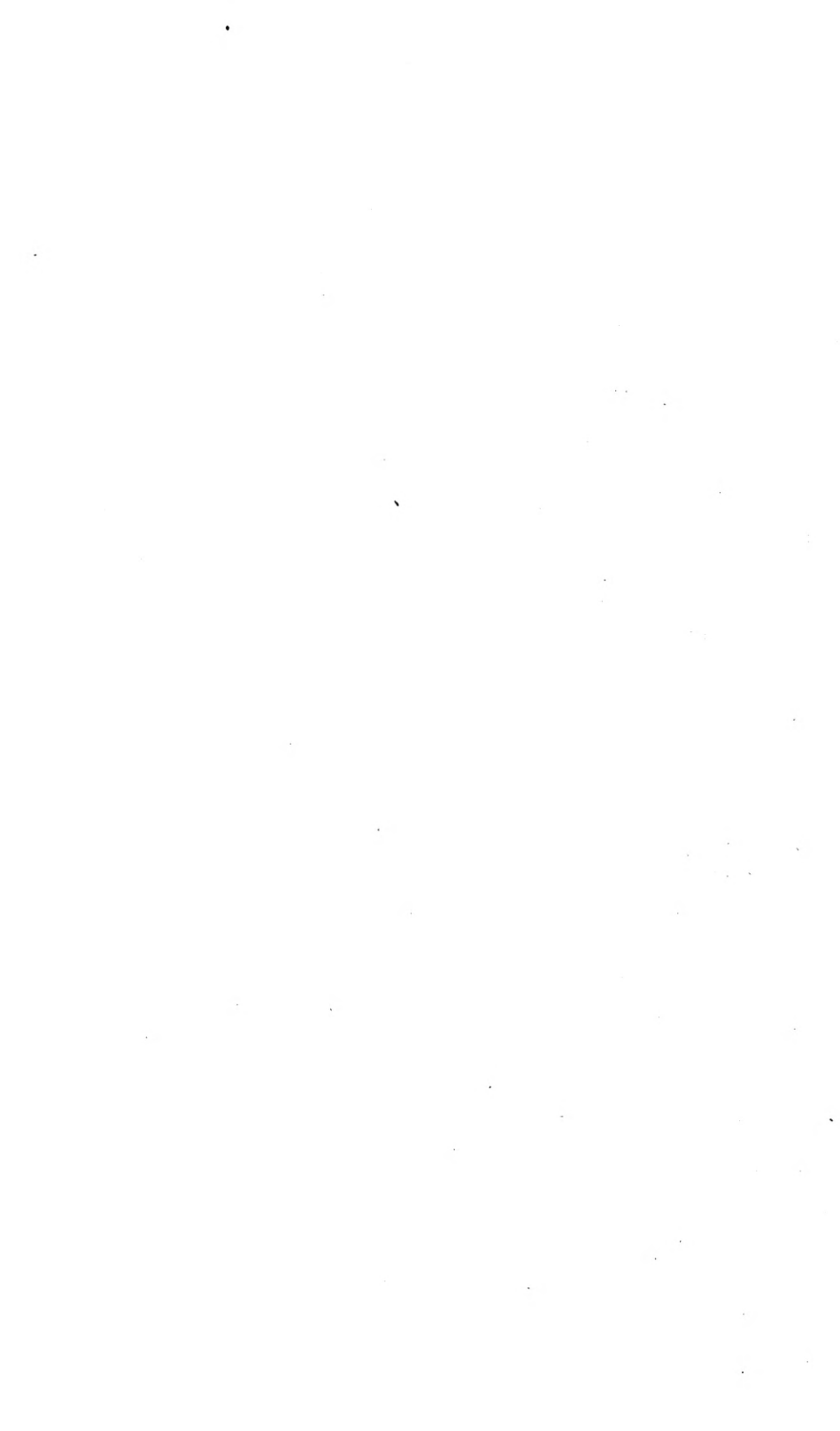
VI. The Reference to the adoption of the Basis of Reunion, by the Whole Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery of Cincinnati, and by Mr. McCune.

OPENING ARGUMENT

FOR THE PROSECUTION,

BY

REV. THOS. H. SKINNER.



ARGUMENT FOR THE PROSECUTION.

May it please the Court, Moderator, and Brethren of the Presbytery of Cincinnati:

The Presbyterian Church is a foundation not to be destroyed. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Ps. 67: 17, 18. "Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4: 8, 11-17.

Upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, the Presbyterian Church has built her house. Her historic doctrine and order, written by a divine finger, and consecrated by the

breath of inspiration, baptized with martyr-blood, and tested in the flame, all are dear to us beyond any earthly treasure. He that toucheth it, toucheth the apple of our eye. We make no vain boast, crying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!" We embrace in the spirit of Christian charity all other evangelical denominations, differing from us on many points and in many ways. But what we do hold as distinctive and peculiar, we engrave on our hearts and unfold on our Presbyterian banner, not ashamed to maintain that it is the truth of God, nor backward to defend it against every assault, whether from friendly foes without, or feigned friends within.

Therefore, in the name of "The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," whose constitution and whose laws have been assailed, traduced, despised—whose honor has been wounded, name denied, and peace and unity and purity disturbed, does the prosecution, advanced, by your order, to its high responsibility, come into the court of this Presbytery to vindicate the doctrine and the rights of said church against the erroneous teaching and the revolutionary course of the defendant impleaded at your bar. This is "judicial process." The question is, *Have we a right to exist?*

The case before us is of no ordinary importance. Its gravity outweighs that of all other cases put together, throughout the whole period of the history of the Presbyterian Church. It involves, not only the truth of her fundamental doctrines, but the foundation also of her whole ecclesiastical edifice, with the structure itself built thereon. In other cases, the most that has been put in question by any of her sons has been some special phases of some special doctrines, or some particulars of polity. This, puts in question her very right to hold distinctive doctrines, her very right to build her Presbyterian house. The issues raised by the defendant, contemplate no less an outcome, in the future, than the overthrow of her whole superstructure, and the tearing up of her whole foundation as a distinctive denomination, and the re-organization of the Presbyterian and all other denominations after the pattern of the new-

born institute at Linwood and Mount Lookout. Her Presbyterian organization, government, discipline, creed, denominational enactments, her ordinances, terms of fellowship and ministry, her vows of ordination, covenant, and right to live—all are put in question. “The form of the house and the fashion thereof, and the goings-out thereof, and the comings-in thereof, and all the laws thereof—upon the top of the mountain, the whole limit thereof, round-about”—the absolute “law of the house”—all is called in question. That apostolic pattern of the Church of Christ, which reforming hands have saved from travesties and deformations of fifteen hundred years, and summoned to a new exhibition at the call of the reforming angel, “Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein”—the gospel church, its ministry, its doctrines, ordinances, fellowship, and form—must now be substituted by a new pattern shown in Mount Lookout towering over Horeb, higher than the new Jerusalem! The symbols of Westminster, last and ripest fruit of eighteen hundred years of conflict, gathering to themselves the truth upon the doctrine and the order of the house of God, must be remanded to the dust of mediæval manuscripts, the dingy alcoves of some old monastery, or, like Ephesian books of sorcery, be committed to the fire to please the “spirit of the age,” the tone and temper of “organic union.”

To the advocacy of such liberalism as this, have we come within a semi-decade from the date of our reunion. Its toleration was impossible for thirty years last past in either branch. After long struggle to reach some authoritative declaration upon a subject of such vast importance to the Church, this Court is here convened at last judicially to say whether the doctrinal and ecclesiastical basis of our common standards, upon which the reunion was effected, shall endure, respected by our officers and people, or whether the Presbyterian denomination, as such, is a foundation to be destroyed for the sake of organic union. The Presbyterian Church asserts her scriptural authority, that is, her divine right to exist, precisely as she is to-day, under her distinctive standards as a separate denomination, protected

by her own denominational enactments and pledged to the enforcement of her doctrine and discipline. The defendant, a member of this Presbytery, asserts a counter-claim no less than this, that the Presbyterian denomination, as such, like all other evangelical denominations, built upon distinctive creeds, has no right whatever to exist, but should desist at once from the enforcement of her distinctive doctrines and her order, and plant herself upon organic union ground. Such is the issue plainly put, clear and unmistakable.

The charges and specifications presented by the prosecution are in your hands. They speak for themselves. The general charge, in twofold form, is disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church in contravention of ordination vows. The specifications support the charges. The proofs support the specifications. The law points are appended to evince the fact that what is charged is an offense against the peace, the unity, and the purity of the Presbyterian Church, and a violation of the ordination vows. The prosecution call for the reading of the specifications serially, leaving the general charge, in its twofold form, to be read at the close of the argument.

SPECIFICATION I.

Law of Organization.

I proceed to consider Specification first. Mr. McCune asserts "the divine law of organization," the law of organic, visible Christian union, is tersely and comprehensively stated in Rom. xv, 7: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ has received us, to the glory of God." Nothing is clearer than that this text relates wholly to personal Christian fellowship and spiritual communion among those who were already members of the church at Rome, but among whom internal dissensions or schisms in the body had arisen on account of meats and drinks, festivals and ceremonies. It is the conclusion of an argument on things *indifferent*, commenced in chapter xiv, 1: "Him that is weak in the faith (*i. e.* in moral conviction as to duty in the premises, for this is the meaning of '*pistis*' here) receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." The word translated "receive" (*proslambanesthe*), the same word used

Rom. xv, 7, occurs twelve times in the New Testament, and signifies (1) taking nourishment, and (2) personal companionship and friendship. The "weak brother" is a church member, already troubled with scruples of conscience, for this is the use of the term "*adelphos*" in the whole argument. "Take to your heart" and "treat kindly" your "weak brother,"—not weak in the personal trust or saving faith of his heart toward Christ, but weak in moral casuistry, or cases of conscience, destitute as to a true conviction of what is morally permissible or not permissible, under the law of Christ, to do or not to do. The question in debate was not as to the *organization* of the Christian church nor as to terms of *admission* to membership, though it is a legitimate inference that differences about things *indifferent* are not to be made grounds of exclusion or non-reception, nor as to *external visible oneness*, nor as to *denominations*, nor as to *church-union*, nor as to terms of *ministerial fellowship*, nor as to *ecclesiastical courts*. All this is not exegesis, but eisegesis—a pure gratuitous importation into the text. It was not a question as to the admission of members into the church, but wholly as to the fellowship of members already admitted—that is, the receiving "*one another*" to mutual personal Christian communion, and terminating strife, alienation, and profitless disputation concerning things indifferent. The "weak" were not to slander those who were "strong" in moral conviction of duty; the "strong" were not to despise the "weak." It was a question of fraternal relations purely, among brethren in the same house, not of organic union between members of different organizations. It was the adiaphoristic controversy of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, waged in the apostolic age—a controversy renewing itself in every period, more or less, in the church of Christ, as to things *indifferent*; *i. e.*, neither "*agatha*," nor "*kaka*," but "*adiaphora*," neither *per se* right nor *per se* wrong, but either right or wrong *per accidens*, or according to circumstances—a question the most difficult of all in Christian morals. Paul's argument is a final arbitration of the whole dispute. Every man must be fully persuaded in his own mind, for

“whatsoever is not of *conviction* is sin.” We must abstain from action if we conscientiously entertain any *doubt* as to the rectitude of our course. Where no objective precept exists, the subjective persuasion of the believer is the rule of action, and on this each one stands or falls to his Master. “Wherefore,” says the apostle, concluding the whole argument, “take to your hearts one another, as Christ also has taken us, to the glory of God.” Lay aside all wrangling, and bitterness, and wrath, and slander, and contempt, Jew and Gentile, be reconciled to each other, in the unity of the spirit and bond of peace, even as Christ has reconciled us to himself, and God has been glorified.

By what right of interpretation, diverting the passage from its context and sense, does Mr. McCune apply to things *essential*, a precept the Holy Ghost applies only to things *indifferent*, or conclude that evangelical denominations, as such, are essentially sinful, and that the Presbyterian denomination, with the rest of them, has no scriptural right to exist? Rom. xv, 7, is his main and oft-repeated text. He finds in it what he calls a “divine, non-excluding law of organization.” In the first place, it has no reference to “organization” whatever. In the next place, even if it had, the non-exclusion has reference to things merely *indifferent*, but no reference to things *essential* which belong to organization. The church may not exclude an applicant, who thinks he has a right, if he chooses, to eat meat or drink wine offered to idols; but it is a preposterous inference that she may not exclude an applicant who refuses to be bound by Christ’s command as to baptism, the Lord’s supper, and obedience to the discipline of the eldership, or who does not believe that Christ is truly man, or the Bible truly infallible. The sophisms of the interpretation are glaring. Mr. McCune confounds *internal relations* of personal Christian fellowship with *external organization*, *Christian* unity with *church* union, the *spiritual* with the *ecclesiastical*, the inner *substance* with the outward *form*, *unity* from within with *union* from without, *essential terms of admission* to membership, with *rules of conduct* for members already admitted concerning things indifferent, *unity* with

union, and the word of God in relation to things about which differences are no bar to membership with the word of God in relation to things about which differences are a bar to membership. Conscience as to meats offered to idols, wines, ceremonies, festivals, and social parties, is certainly a very different thing from conscience as to prelacy and independency, elders and no elders, creed and no creed, baptism and no baptism, the covenant of God with believers, terms of ministerial fellowship, and whether an unbaptized person may be admitted to church membership and come to the Lord's supper. Would Paul treat these last matters as things *indifferent*, and class them in the same category with the first? Would he tell us to drop our differences as to *essential* things for the sake of organic union, and act in reference to matters concerning which he has laid down the most authoritative and unbending rules and precepts, as though we were left here to subjective persuasion as the only law in the case? Truth is worth something, worth more than all outward church union; and the head of the Church, the builder of his own house, will split an indifferent external church union, making an idol of her boasted uniformity, into a thousand fragments, to find one that will be loyal to his truth. He has done it more than once, and will do it again. By what right does Mr. McCune ground the law of church organization in a text relating wholly to things *indifferent*? Are the order of the house of God, its structure, ordinances, government and discipline, its officers and constitution, matters of *indifference*? Are ministers of every kind, because deemed evangelical according to some minimum standard of texts nakedly quoted and differently interpreted, and adjudged to be called to the ministry, some by one text, some by another, all to be received into one common ecclesiastical court as ministers of Christ? As to private members, does a "*credible*" profession of faith in Christ bind the church to admit a professor who refuses to obey the command of Christ to be baptized? Is our expediency to set at naught Christ's authority? Or, again, is the church restrained from exclusion, except upon evidence of unregeneracy?

Or does she enjoy the right to admit in a case of disobedience to Christ's command? And yet such is the exegesis of Rom. xv, 7, by Mr. McCune.

The Presbyterian Church condemns the doctrine of Mr. McCune. She denies, outright and officially, his interpretation of Romans xv : 7, upon which he builds his theory. As to her reception of members, I shall discuss the question further on. As to the application of Romans xv : 7, to the reception of ministers, she says, Digest, p. 45 (2): although "we are willing to receive one another, as Christ has received us, to the glory of God, and admit *to fellowship in sacred ordinances* all such as we have grounds to believe Christ will at last admit to the kingdom of heaven, *yet we are undoubtedly obliged to take care that the faith once delivered to the saints be kept pure and uncorrupted among us, and so handed down to our posterity.*" So, again, she declares, while thus asserting her right to exclude from her ecclesiastical courts all ministers who can not hold the truth as she holds it, that "the terms of communion adopted in our church have ever been in accordance with the divine command that we should receive one another as Christ has received us. We fully recognize the authority of the command "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." *The application of this command is entirely confined to private membership in the Church. It has no reference to the admission of men to offices in the house of God, or to the qualifications for admission into the office of the ministry.*" She asserts her perfect right "to declare the terms of admission into her communion, and the qualification of her ministers and members, as well as the whole system of internal government which Christ has appointed." Digest, p. 44 (2). She "enjoins on all her members and probationers for the ministry that they teach and preach according to the form of sound words in said confession and catechisms, and avoid and oppose all contrary errors thereto." Digest, p. 48 (1). She refuses to "license or ordain to the work of the ministry any candidate, until he give them competent satisfaction as to his learning and experimental acquaintance with religion, and skill in divinity and cases of conscience; and

declare his acceptance of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as the confession of his faith, and promise subjection to the Presbyterian plan of government in the Westminster Directory." Digest, p. 49 (6). She demands of all her officers, deacons, elders, and ministers, by most solemn ordination vows, that they "sincerely adopt" and "approve" her standards. Digest, pp. 346, 399, 411. She declares that her Confession of Faith is not only "necessary and expedient," but "absolutely requisite to the settled peace of the Church, and to the happy and orderly existence of Christian communion;" and subjects to discipline any in her communion who "traduce" it. Digest, p. 54 (11). Ministers who can not adopt her standards she will not receive. Digest, p. 57. Those who are hostile to creeds and confessions she rejects. Digest, p. 55. She requires those who change their doctrinal views to "peaceably withdraw." Digest, p. 48 (11). Ministers who come to her from other denominations, she enjoins "to teach in the manner required by our standards." Digest, p. 148. Those who "withdraw to other denominations" she commands to be "stricken from the roll." Digest, pp. 169, 620. "Churches" that refuse to be organized according to her principles of government, she will not receive. Digest, pp. 92 (2), 63 (2). She will unite, ecclesiastically, with none, except on the basis of her Westminster standards, and would only reunite her own divisions on the same basis, pure and simple. Digest, pp. 45, 48, 58, 61, 62, 71, 91. Her whole organic constitution she asserts to be "agreeable to Scripture and the practice of the primitive Christians." Digest, p. 120. And makes express provision that her courts shall enforce and observe "the Constitution of the Church." She "strictly enjoins on her presbyteries to "promote the diffusion and wider circulation of the Confession of Faith and Book of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church;" recommends her congregations to "supply the poor" with the same and the catechisms; and urges pastors to "induce every family in our connection to supply themselves with a copy of the Standards of our Church." Baird's Digest, p. 45. All this is what Mr. McCune calls "Presby-

terian sectarianism," a "hurtful excrescence," and to be condemned. The "common faith" of the Church of Christ she regards as something more than the minimum collation of a few texts, undefined by modern organic Unionists. She regards it as the consensus of the symbols of the Reformation. Digest, pp. 56, 71. Such is the honor she pours upon the martyr-won and glorious doctrinal banner of her faith and order.

In reference to the reception of private Church members, she presumes not to sit in judgment on the heart of any. She requires not only a credible profession of faith in and love to Christ, but also some proper knowledge of Christ, of the nature of the Lord's supper, and pledge of obedience not only to Christ but to those whom He has set to rule in His Church, and exercise discipline for their spiritual good. These are her terms of communion. Therefore, without judging the heart, or deciding that they are without faith in Christ, she refuses to admit professed Universalists. Digest, 674. She makes it a question of expediency, to be determined, in all cases, by the session, whether to receive those who object to the baptism of children, or those who are connected, in any way, with the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. Digest, pp. 674, 675. Those who pursue any secular avocation on the Sabbath are not to be admitted. Digest, p. 678. They who refuse to be themselves baptized, or to pledge submission to her discipline, she forbids an entrance. Digest, pp. 676, 677. In all these cases, without assuming to decide that those she declines to receive are without faith, and believing in some cases that faith may exist, she asserts her right to so decline, for reasons founded on the word of God. It is clear, therefore, that the Presbyterian Church does exclude from her membership certain individuals whose personal faith in Christ she does not assume to question, and certain ministers whose professed acceptance of a "few leading doctrines" she does not pretend to dispute. She declares, by her Supreme Court, that Romans xv: 7 does not forbid, as Mr. McCune asserts it does forbid, such exclusion from her own pale. She affirms that she is "entitled

to declare the terms of admission " into her ecclesiastical communion, and the " qualifications of her ministers and members," and that her terms of communion have always been " in accordance with the divine command that we should receive one another as Christ has received us"—that is in perfect accordance with Romans xv: 7. Mr. McCune tells her that her utterance is untrue. She declares that terms of Church-membership are one thing, and terms of salvation are another, and that every church has the right to declare its own terms, and that in some respects these may be different from each other. Mr. McCune denies this. She asserts that the force of the precept in Romans xv: 7 relates wholly to things indifferent—to the personal relations of private members—and that it has no reference to ministerial qualifications, to the reception or exclusion of ministers, or to things essential to organization, such as a Divinely-established order, sacraments, ordinances, or non-toleration of false doctrine. Mr. McCune tells us she is blind. He is in complete antagonism, as a Presbyterian minister, with the faith and order of his Church on this whole matter.

And as to the excommunication of church members, the Presbyterian Church does not base this excommunication upon the judgment that they are unregenerate. " Gross offenders who will not be reclaimed by the private or public admonitions of the Church are to be cut off," Christians or no Christians. Digest p. 513. They may in some cases be children of God whom only such punishment can be the means of reclaiming from the snare of Satan. They may be children of the wicked one. The Church does not decide. Enough, that, whether from ignorance, pride, perversity, temptation, or theories of church power, or hostile judgment, or contumacy, he who refuses to " hear the Church," or submit to her discipline, is to be as a " heathen man and a publican." The authority of Christ's house is to be maintained. The Church, without sitting in judgment on the heart of any, excludes from her communion those guilty of long and wilful absence, and violation of solemn covenant engagements. Digest, p. 494. For grossly heretical views

she excommunicates. Digest, p. 128. For unlawful divorce or marriage, and for breach of marriage vows by wilful absence, which she accounts a breach of the seventh commandment. Digest, p. 494 Larger Cat. Q. 139. Also for persistence in improper language (p. 569), for slander, fraud, theft, neglect of the Lord's supper—in short, for any “gross offense,” continued against the admonition of the Church. Her discipline deals with *conduct* alone. It demands a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ. The Presbyterian Church believes that a man may be a Christian and yet be guilty of “gross offenses,” as were Abraham and Lot, Jacob and Samson, David and Peter. For such offenses, unrepented of, excommunication will ensue. Her purity depends upon it. She has no infallible term of admission, no infallible term of exclusion. A credible profession before men may be a false one before God. An excommunicated person may yet be regenerate, though delivered, for the time, to Satan. Her act of exclusion from membership does not depend on her judgment of the regeneracy or unregeneracy of the excluded. Search the standards from beginning to end. Not a clause can be found intimating any such doctrine as that of Mr. McCune, but everything to the contrary. Nowhere does the Church teach that excommunication proceeds upon the assumption or proof that the offender is unregenerate. Nor does the Scripture, to which Mr. McCune appeals, state, in any case, that the excommunicate either was or was not a Christian. It calls him a “brother,” that is, a church member, for that is the meaning of the term “*adelphos*.” There is no proof that he was not a Christian. “Disorderly walk” is no more a proof—*ipso facto*, of unregeneracy, than faultless conduct is a proof, *ipso facto*, of holiness. However clear may be the gross inconsistency between disorderly conduct and divine grace, yet it is a humiliating fact that some of God's children do lie, and slander, and deceive, and steal, and practice injustice, and commit grievous crimes, and persist for a long time in the same, and give occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme. While it is true that the court, in inflicting excommunication, does virtually review and reverse the

judgment already had upon the qualifications for membership of the applicant at the time of his reception, yet it is false to infer, either that the original decision to receive settled the question of his regeneracy, or that its reversal, by excommunication, settles the question of his unregeneracy. All that it does settle is that, as it was only upon a *credible profession of faith* (not credible evidence of regeneracy), he could be received, so it is for want of that credible profession he is, at last, excluded. He is excluded because of the existence of that which, had it appeared at first, would have prevented his immediate reception. It is "not necessary to show" that the apostles excluded real Christians, before the Church may exclude a disorderly member. Our Book recognizes no such doctrine. The theory of excommunication advocated by Mr. McCune is a legitimate outgrowth of his organic union principles. It is not the doctrine of the standards of our Church. Our courts judge conduct. God alone judges the heart.

I have presented the doctrine of Mr. McCune and the doctrine of the standards. Zenith and nadir are not more opposed. I have shown the falsity of his interpretation of Rom. xv:7, and the official denial of that interpretation by the General Assembly, twice over—a denial fortified by the whole frame-work of our polity, and wrought throughout the whole web of our history. On Mr. McCune's theory our standards ought to be burned up, our whole form of government, and book of discipline, their structure, captions, and provisions, and all our decisions built thereupon, destroyed, for all are utterly irreconcilable with his non-excluding "divine law of organization." When, therefore, he teaches such doctrine and propagates such views, and calls upon Presbyterians and all other evangelical Christians to rally for a reconstruction of the whole Church of Christ upon his Linwood and Mount Lookout basis, the prosecution affirms, in the name of the Presbyterian Church, that he advocates principles and views, not only at war with the standards of the Church, but which, if generally accepted, would totally subvert our constitution, and blot out the very existence of the Presbyterian denomination itself. His so-

called "divine law of organization" is simply a misinterpretation of the scripture. •

SPECIFICATION II.

Anti-denomination.

I proceed to the second specification. In it Mr. McCune affirms the essential sinfulness of all evangelical denominations, as such, and this includes the Presbyterian denomination. None have any right to exist, because not formed on his "divine law of organization." "The Presbyterian Church requires more" than Mr. McCune's law requires, and, not being built upon this law, has no scriptural right to exist, as a denomination. The Christianity held in common with other denominations he does not assail. The distinctive peculiarities of Presbyterianism, in her doctrine and polity, all that differentiates her from other churches, and the teaching which she enforces upon her official ministry; in brief, her distinctive denominationalism, he condemns as "sectarianism," "essentially sinful," "an excrescence," "anti-scriptural," "unscriptural," "mischievous," and "destitute of scriptural authority." He is opposed, utterly, to denominations as such. They are "sinful." Of course, if this is the fact, the quicker they are done away with, the better.

The Presbyterian Church does not so believe. She regards her government, discipline, organization, creed, covenant, terms of admission and laws of fellowship as essentially righteous. The very things which distinguish her as a denomination, and constitute her peculiarities, she cherishes with becoming pride and gratitude to God, and claims her historic heirloom as evidence that, as a distinctive denomination, she is, in her peculiar doctrine and order, nearer the Word of God than any other denomination on earth. The proof of this is abundant as the pages of her standards, and multiplied as the leaves of her history. In her "system of union," portrayed in the principles preliminary to her form of government, and elsewhere, she recognizes the right of all evangelical denominations to exist, equally as her own, and upon the very same grounds, grounds of conscience, charity, forbearance, peace and unity, grounds of expedi-

ency and propriety. She calls them "orthodox churches of Christ," "societies," "particular societies," "associations of particular churches," "denominations," "protestant denominations," and affirms their right to exist, and to declare their own terms of communion. Digest, pp. 44, 51, 147. She acknowledges room for honest differences of opinion as to "truths and forms." Pp. 44, 50. She insists upon denominational confessions and creeds, as "absolutely requisite to the settled peace of the Church, and to the happy and orderly existence of Christian Communion." P. 54. She excludes from her own denomination "all Ministers and Churches who can not relinquish their peculiarities with a good conscience," and will not tolerate their antagonisms in her own bosom. P. 57. She says: "We are Presbyterians, and we firmly believe the Presbyterian system of doctrine, discipline, and church government to be *nearer to the Word of God* than that of any other sect or denomination." Baird's Digest, p. 38. She has made her confession and discipline a basis, and the only basis, of her re-united existence. Moore's Digest, p. 91 [2]. She declares her distinctive organization is "agrecable to Scripture and the practice of primitive Christians," and in full consistency with this belief she yet "embraces in the spirit of charity all who differ from her in opinion and practice on these subjects." P. 120 [1]. This toleration of the rights and institutions of others, so far from prompting her to self-dissolution for the sake of organic union, leads her to engrave in her standards the perpetual provision that her courts shall "take effectual care" that her peculiar constitution shall be preserved and enforced. P. 141 [IV]. Nor will she allow any minister belonging to another denomination to retain official membership in her own. P. 620. I need not quote further. The Presbyterian Church may be either deplorably blind, or bigoted, or criminal in Mr. McCune's eyes, for her estimate of her own importance, and the exercise of Christian charity towards all other evangelical denominations; but sin and holiness are not more opposed than are the contradictory positions of Mr. McCune and his Church. It is not possible that any loyal Presbyterian could indulge the lan-

guage of Mr. McCune, or sincerely adopt and approve the Westminster standards. Nor is it possible that any Presbyterian minister, having the honor, peace, unity and purity of the Presbyterian Church at heart, more than his own theories or purposes, could be so far forgetful of his solemn ordination vows, as to countenance, encourage, palliate, defend, or even tolerate, the continued propagation of a standing libel upon his own Church, proclaiming to the world the "essential sinfulness" of its denominational character, and denying to it, as well as to all other evangelical denominations, even the right of existence.

Mr. McCune's anti-denominational law rests upon a doctrine in irreconcilable conflict with the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church and the Scriptures as to the "Body of Christ." He not only misinterprets God's Word as to things indifferent; he likewise misinterprets it as to things essential. He blunders into the papal artifice of identifying the "Body of Christ" with the "visible Church," or the whole company of professing Christians. The Church on earth, he tells us, is an external and unitous organization of regenerate souls. The "Communion of Saints" is, therefore, an ecclesiastical communion. Membership in the visible Church is membership in the "Body of Christ." The separation of the visible Church into denominations is the rending of the "Body of Christ," and a sinful breach of the "Communion of Saints." Hence his anti-denominationalism. Hence his declaration that denominations, as such, are "essentially sinful" and have no right to exist. Hence his new "divine law of organization" and "non-exclusion" of any Christian minister or member from any particular denomination. Hence his practical denial of what our standards expressly affirm, viz: that each society has the right to declare its own terms of ministerial fellowship. Hence the glaring fallacy in the opening sentence of the Linwood "Declaration," and all through the "Address" to the Churches of North America, confounding the "One Body" with the Visible Church, denouncing denominations as a disruption of the Body and a dividing of Christ. Hence the unendurable sentiment that so long as denominations exist our

Savior's intercessory prayer is not fully realised, as though the doctrine of union to Christ and the Communion of Saints depended for its perfection upon external oneness of Church organization. Hence the external oneness he so zealously advocates. It is Rome's theory and Rome's unity.

But the Church visible is not the "Body of Christ;" nor is external church communion the "Communion of Saints;" nor is external oneness the unity of the "One Body" described by Paul; nor is Church Union Christian Unity. Our Standards discriminate, clearly, the Communion of Saints from Church Communion. The latter is the external fellowship of the visible Church in ordinances and ecclesiastical membership, restricted by the right of every particular Church to declare its own terms of communion; the former is the inward, spiritual, and unlimited fellowship of the whole "Body of Christ" in earth and in Heaven in the life, sufferings, death, resurrection, grace, and glory, of its adorable Head. It is spiritual. "I in them, and Thou in me!" "That they may be one as we are." It rests upon the indissoluble spiritual conjunction of the living members with the living Head, each member in inseparable communion with every other, no matter how outwardly separated by time, place, or name, all common members of the one spiritual "Body of Christ." Form of Gov., chap. I (II). Conf. of Faith, chap. XXVI. Larger Cat. Q. 69, 82, 83, 86. The external symbol or pledge of this "Communion of Saints" is not any common external church-membership, but the sacramental scene and solemnity of the Lord's Supper. Conf. of Faith, chap. XXIX (I). Nowhere in our Standards is the "One Body," or the "Body of Christ" applied to the visible Church. Nowhere is external oneness of organization classed among the privileges or marks of either the visible or invisible Church. Nowhere is the Communion of Saints confounded with external organic union. Nowhere is outward oneness of organization, this side of eternal glory, implied as a necessary demand or involved result of this "Communion of Saints." Everywhere the doctrine runs through all descriptions and definitions that the Communion of Saints,

founded on the spiritual oneness for which our Saviour prayed—a prayer ever fulfilled from the hour it was poured at Gethsemane's gate—is as consistent with the existence of five hundred denominations as with one. Nowhere is it possible to draw the conclusion that evangelical denominations, as such, are a breach of Christian unity, whatever they may be of an outward, all-absorbing external Romanistic Babel of Indifferentism and Church Union. Who does not know that “Rome's Organic Union,” so called, is a carnal caricature and Satanic aping of the Spiritual union between Christ the “Head” and the mystical “Body?” Upon such a theory of union, anti-denominationalism rests. It is Rome's argument, and in Proof 6, Mr. McCune admits it. The external and spiritual are confounded. The logic is that the outward church must be visibly one because the invisible church is spiritually one. The theory leads inevitably to an external visible Head, the Pope. The Reformers denied the theory, and lifted to notice the clear distinction in God's Word between the visible church and the “Body of Christ.” The doctrine of Mr. McCune is a denial of this fundamental truth, and a consequent denial of the Scripture right of the Reformed denominations to exist. He charges that they violate the external oneness and Communion of Saints. Protestantism never fathered such a mediæval monstrosity or jumble of confusion as this, and then sought to justify its separation from Rome. Reformed Symbolism could not embody it, and justify the separation from Lutheranism. Much less could the Westminster Standards assert the doctrine and justify the distinctive, peculiar, and Divine right of the Presbyterian Church to exist. It is not the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church that evangelical denominations, as such, are essentially sinful. It is not the doctrine of the Scriptures. It is anti-Protestant and pro-Roman. Mr. McCune has yet to learn that the guilt of Schism and Sectarianism rested not upon the Reformers, but upon Rome; on the English Establishment, and not upon the two thousand ejected non-conformist ministers; on the Scotch Establishment, and not on the Free Church movement. He has yet to learn

what all History teaches, that God raises up denominations for his own glory and the good of His Church, and, that, in every case of importance, the outward Babel of Organic Union has been broken up for the sake of the Peace and Truth of God, of more value than any externalism down from the Signal Mound on Shinar's plain struck by lightning, to the last theological Institute for "Candidates" and "Ministers" at Linwood and Mt. Lookout.

"The Church," says Dr. Bannerman in his admirable work, "is described as the 'Body of Christ,' all the members of which are united to Him as the Head of life, influence, and grace to them; *a description not applicable to any body of professing Christians, made up of any or all communions*, but only to be realized in that great multitude which no man has seen or numbered, who make up the invisible Church of the Redeemer, and whose names are written in Heaven." "To apply interchangeably, and as if properly convertible, what is spoken in Scripture of the invisible Church, to the visible, and *vice versa*, is a frequent and favorite resource of Romanist Controversialists." Church of Christ, Vol. I, pp. 8, 39. It is precisely what Mr. McCune has done. It is the basis of his anti-denominationalism. It rests on an utterly false view of the nature of the Church. "Romanists teach," says Dr. Hodge, "that the Church is essentially an external organized community, as the commonwealth of Israel." "Protestants teach, in exact accordance with the doctrine of Christ and His apostles, (1) that the Church, as such, is not an external organization, and (2) that all true believers, in whom the Spirit of God dwells, are members of that Church which is the 'Body of Christ.'" Syst. Theol. Vol. I, pp. 131, 135.

This is the view of our Standards. They deny that the "Body of Christ," the "One Body" means the visible Church, and so deny Mr. McCune's second fundamental interpretation of Scripture. They deny that the oneness of the "Body of Christ" is external oneness, and so contradict Mr. McCune's doctrine that denominations are a crime against the "One Body," the "Body of Christ," and a crime against the "Communion of Saints." Denying

this, they deny that denominations are “essentially sinful,” and affirming the Divine right or Scriptural authority for the existence of the Presbyterian denomination, as such. They take the same ground, in reference to Mr. McCune’s third fundamental misinterpretation, viz., that of our Savior’s intercessory prayer as necessitating external oneness, and also in reference to his fourth misinterpretation of the Scripture referring to the “schisms and divisions” in the Corinthian Church which he interprets as external separations to be avoided, whereas they were internal disorders in the spiritual “Body of Christ,” personal alienations of believers, divisions of mind, party preferences and strifes, “Schism in the Body.” The Sectarianism Paul deplored was not a charitable denominationalism. It was a party spirit in the “One Body,” a sinful breach of spiritual fellowship, not of Church membership. It was not two peaceful denominations, working nobly for the master, and bearing with each other’s conscientious differences, he rebuked, but one organic denomination, depreciating the truth of Christ, wasting its energies in strife and alienations about Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ, and marring its own spiritual life, unity, and communion by sinful contention. Well has Dr. Errett, the gifted editor of the *Standard*, said, in his controversy with Mr. McCune: “It is easy to say hard things about *Sectarianism*, and to profess great abhorrence of it. But the farther men get from Christ, the more liberal can they afford to be in giving away His *Truth*, and in the popular sense of the word *Charity*, the men of the largest charity are the men who hold at the very cheapest rate the truth that Jesus taught.” *Standard*, December 18, 1875.

Mr. McCune exclaims, both hands uplifted, against the “sin” of “enforcing” upon the official ministry a distinctive denominational creed. He smites it as a crime against the Communion of Saints. Presbyterian Sectarianism, as he calls it, he hates. I have already quoted the constitutional provisions of the Presbyterian Church requiring the enforcement of her Standards upon all her office-bearers, ministers, elders, and deacons. I need not quote them

again. Enactment of denominational laws, and enforcement of denominational creeds, he accounts an oppression of the conscience. Whose conscience does it oppress? Not his who sincerely approves it. It is a protest against his own ordination vows, a declaration that he is not in fact, what he professed himself to be, and that he does not sincerely adopt and approve our Standards. He denies the right of the Presbyterian Church to present to him the alternatives of either teaching the distinctive doctrines of her system, or leaving her communion. The issue is plain and unmistakable. It is the proclamation of independency while yet remaining in the bosom of the Church. He has given us abundant illustration of it. For "ten years" he has denied her right to exist, or enforce her creed. He protested against the appointment of a Committee of Investigation. He protested against the exercise of episcopal power. He protested against the institution of judicial process. He declared, at first, he would not receive the judicial charges from the prosecution. He is opposed to the enforcement of our denominational law. He denounces it as a "sin." He tells us he proposes to teach in future the doctrines he has taught in the past. And to fortify his claim to exercise himself in this imperial way, he, formally, announces to all whom it may concern that "*the Presbyterian Church has ceased to enforce Infant Baptism.*" He longs and labors for the day when she will cease to enforce all her distinctive tenets. He would like to see them either dropped off or hung up as a dried curiosity in some library, or metamorphosed by revision into the likeness of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Manual, with a "Basis of Fellowship" for a Creed, and some "Regulations of Expediency" for a Polity.

Moderator, the doctrine of non-enforcement is not the doctrine of our Standards, whatever our lax practice may be. It is the doctrine of covenant-breaking, anarchy, and revolution, the doctrine of the tyranny of liberalism, and the despotism of arbitrary power, trampling every constitutional right of the individual under foot, and every guarantee for the defense of the truth and order of the House of

God, and for the protection of personal character of ministers and members. It is the doctrine of disobedience to vows. It is treason to the Presbyterian Church. It is nullification. It abolishes the Constitution to meet a contingency, build up an interest, or further a scheme. It keeps no faith with brethren. Promises are pretences. Compacts are nullities. Majorities are riders. Engagements, sealed by prayer, are mockeries. It invokes the repudiation of discipline—offers a premium on policy adverse to truth, and bids for a human expediency adverse to Divine righteousness. It means liberty to do and to teach as one pleases, under the euphonious nomenclature of “forbearance in love”—license to circulate assaults upon Presbyterian doctrine and polity—toleration to print manuals of organic union, and to organize at Linwood and Mt. Look-out. Need I ask, is it possible for a Presbyterian minister sincerely to approve the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, and be zealous and faithful in studying her peace, unity, and purity, and yet advocate the non-enforcement of her distinctive doctrine and order? Is this loyalty?

Once more, Mr. McCune asserts, not only that the Presbyterian denomination has no right to exist, but denies her right, as such, to be called a “Church.” His plea that this is the Congregational view amounts to nothing. This may appear to some a little thing, but it is great. It means more than the childish truism that one particular Church is not many particular Churches, or that many particular Churches are not a single particular Church. Pompey, couching at the door, knows that one is not forty, and forty not one. It means that the term “Church” can not be applied to a plurality of congregations, organically held under one rule. It is a lever to upheave our whole polity. Believe that statement, and Presbyterianism melts out of sight. The Presbyterian standards maintain that the term “Church” has a five-fold Scriptural application. It means (1) the “Body of Christ,” *i. e.* the whole body of believers on earth and in heaven, the plural unit of all who are joined to Christ by individual faith, the Invisible Church;

(2) the whole body, or plural unit of professing Christians on earth, together with their children, *i. e.* the outward Visible Church; (3) the whole body, or plural unit of professed believers in any particular spot, *i. e.* the particular congregation; (4) the whole body, or plural unit of associated congregations organically connected together under one ecclesiastical order or rule, *i. e.* the particular denomination; (5) the whole bench, or plural unit of representatives, or office-bearers, as distinguished from the congregation or the people, *i. e.* a particular court. Mr. McCune denies two of these definitions in whole, the 4th and 5th, and two in part, the 2d and 3d. He holds that the term "Church" is applicable, "in the singular number," (1) to the Body of Christ, and (2) to a particular congregation, minus the infants of believers. He denies that it is applicable to a plurality of congregations organically connected under one ecclesiastical rule, with superior representative Courts of review and control, *i. e.* he denies Presbytery and asserts Independency. A Presbytery for him is "an unauthorized and unscriptural" body, a Synod, the same, a General Assembly, the same. The necessary result is that the Presbyterian denomination, as such, is no "Church" at all. It follows from his argument on the definition of a Church. This denial strikes at the root of our whole polity. Every Presbyterian knows, perfectly well, that the peculiar and distinctive mark of Presbyterianism, as a polity, is not the eldership, for the early congregationalists all had their bench of elders, and John Owen's celebrated treatise on the "True Nature of a Gospel Church," abundantly establishes this fact; but it is (1) the doctrine of a plurality of congregations organically held together in subordination to one common ecclesiastical rule, and (2) an ascending series of courts built upon that rule. These in their totality constitute a Church. This is Presbyterianism as opposed to the individualistic idea of Independency. Mr. McCune retires from the Hall of Westminster, with the Independents, unable to stand beside the Presbyterians, and maintain the proposition "the Scripture doth hold forth that many particular congregations may be under one Presbyterial govern-

ment." Gillespie's "Armor" he throws aside. His theory repudiates an ascending series of courts. Distinctive Presbyterian polity can not survive his denial of the application of the term Church "in the singular number" to a plurality of associated congregations organically held under one ecclesiastical rule. The Presbyterian denomination is, therefore, "not a Church." "Admit," says Dr. Bannerman, "the narrow position taken by the Independents in regard to the true meaning and nature of the Church, as defined in Scripture, restrict the term to one or other of the two significations of either the invisible Church at large, or a single congregation of believers in a particular locality, and you, in fact, concede every principle that is necessary for them to establish their views as to the form of the Church and the nature of its government." It is precisely just what Mr. McCune has done. It is not possible for a man sincerely to adopt and approve our Presbyterian polity and advocate the views of Mr. McCune. I affirm again, upon his own testimony, that Mr. McCune is an Independent in polity, and not a Presbyterian. It is not possible for a man with such convictions to be at rest, or study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church. The first advening opportunity he will either seek or create an independent pastorate where his particular local Church "in the singular number" will exist "outside Presbyterian jurisdiction," as at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, while he himself still hangs on to his "unauthorized," "extra-Scriptural" Presbyterian organization, for the sake of "good standing" and public "indorsement" by a body whose character he denounces as "sectarian," whose distinctive creed he traduces as an "excrecence," whose "right to exist" he denies, and whose name as a "Church" he rejects, and with a boldness unparalleled he informs us that his purpose is to remain in the Presbyterian Church, spread abroad his doctrines and "imbue the whole denomination with them," and agitate and seek "revision" of the standards in the interest of his scheme. Is this loyalty? Is it honor? I affirm that it is disloyalty and treason of the most glaring character, deliberate, intentional, and persistent to the Church, as well as

persistent misrepresentation of Scripture, and that, as a secular editor has well said, "a charge of nitro-glycerine under a nine inch wall, would not be more destructive to the wall than McCuneism is, if allowed, to the Presbyterian denomination." In answer to Mr. McCune's allegation that the Presbyterian denomination is not a Church, I present her legal title, under which she is incorporated and which flames on the frontlet of her standards he professes to approve, "*The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.*" I pass to the third specification.

SPECIFICATION III.

Creeds.

If Mr. McCune's views have amazed us, already, on account of their gross perversions of Scripture, and point-blank contradiction of our standards, they will, under this specification, make us almost doubt our own eyes, and compel us to read again the proofs, finger on every line. What is it we see? The sight of a Presbyterian minister, who having professed sincere adoption of the Westminster standards, yet lifts up the voice of remonstrance and declares to the church that he is utterly opposed to all human creeds; that the only creed he will accept is a "genuine New Testament creed," *i. e.* a syllabus of unexplained texts, a "few leading truths," or what he calls "the common faith" "expressed in God's own language" as "commonly received," "without any human inferences," "deductions," or "modifications;" that he would "strike out" of every creed, had he the power, everything all Christians could "not see to be law in Scripture;" that "the Bible" (he does not say whether in Hebrew or Greek or English) is the "only true, proper, and sufficient creed for all ministers;" that human creeds are sectarian creeds and "always mischievous and sinful;" that every argument to prove the need of an enlarged creed is a "falsity;" that no creed tests are to be allowed in the examination or ordination of ministers (an illustration of which was had in the "Council" that examined and installed Mr. McCune over the new institute that requires "no assent to any denominational peculiarity!"); that "no surrender" of any peculiarity, and free speech, with no

“enforcement” of any peculiarity and free speech is the Gospel style of things, and that before the Church has any right to make a creed at all, she must be either unanimously orthodox, or unanimously heretical, in order that no man’s conscience may be oppressed! The reason for all this, he tells us, is, first, that “Saving Faith,” and second, “a few leading fundamental doctrines” (he does not say how many) effectually “exclude all fatal heresy” (not saying whether he means fatal to salvation, or fatal to the truth of God, which is the means of salvation); and that herein the blessed apostles were an example to us, and to all sectarian Protestantism, *versus* our own “unblushing assumption of divine prerogative,” which differs nothing, he assures us, from the “rotten basis on which Rome stands.” “If,” in the language of Mr. McCune, “the whole Church of the living God, including all, of every name, who give satisfactory scriptural evidence that they are born of the Spirit,” had only entertained, from the beginning, similar sentiments to these, what a literature had been spared, how abbreviated the theological curriculum had been, what a saving of funds unnecessarily wasted on seminaries, and of toil in laboriously writing the career of the Church, and how multiplied prototypes of the Council at Mount Look-out would have dazzled in history, instead of the dull spectacles of Nice, Chalcedon, Dort, and Westminster!

Our Standards set their face against the doctrine of Mr. McCune and repudiate it as dangerous and false. They do it in the declaration that every Christian Church has the right to declare its own terms of communion. They do it not only in affirming the right of private judgment, but the Church’s right, as the Steward of the mysteries of God, to declare to the world in her own language, as a witness on the stand, speaking in his own words, what she believes the Word of God means, and what she understands thereby. “Understandest thou what thou readest? How can I expect some man should guide me?” Acts 8: 30. “The meaning of the Bible,” says Cecil, “is the Bible.” “The sense of Scripture,” says Waterland, “is Scripture.” The Presbyterian Church affirms that “Confessions of Faith,

containing formulas of doctrine and rules for conducting the discipline and worship proper to be maintained in the house of God, are not only recognized as necessary and expedient, but, *as the character of human nature is continually aiming at innovation*, absolutely requisite to the settled peace of the Church, and to the happy and orderly existence of Christian Communion." Digest, p. 54. She believes her creed "can not be abandoned without abandonment of the Word of God," p. 54. She enforces it, by solemn vows, upon all her ministers, elders, and deacons, pp. 399, 410. They who "traduce" it are amenable to discipline, pp. 54, 55. "Ministers who can not adopt the standards are not to be received," p. 57. Those who change their views are to "peaceably withdraw," p. 48. Others, who come to her from other bodies, are "to teach in the manner required by our standards," p. 148. She repudiates any and every doctrine that would "impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system," p. 85. She appends the apostles' creed at the end of her own, and recommends the Heidelberg Catechism as one of a number of reformed symbols, as maintaining "the faith once delivered to the saints," p. 56. She expressly forbids the teaching of any doctrine "inconsistent with the sacred Scriptures *as explained and summarily taught in the doctrinal standards of our Church*," p. 304. As to "human deductions and inferences," which Mr. McCune will not tolerate, she says "that the whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, *or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture*." Conf. of Faith, ch. 1, sec. 2. She charges the Synod "to take effectual care that Presbyteries observe the Constitution of the Church," p. 191, and warns, in the most earnest language, against any one who, "under the specious pretense of honoring the sacred Scriptures, would persuade you to reject all written or printed creeds, and forms of discipline, alleging that those who adopted such, substitute them for divine inspiration." Baird's Digest, p. 638. Such is the law of the church to which Mr. McCune belongs ; its denominational law ; its enactment. He denounces it as an

“excrecence,” a “sin,” a “sectarian oppression,” and wishes it were out of the way. Do you believe he “sincerely adopts” our Confession, or “sincerely approves” our government and discipline? He does no such thing. He disparages and traduces both, and inquires, with a triumphant air, “*Did the Apostolic Church demand assent to the Presbyterian Confession of Faith?*”

Mr. McCune’s theory is as ridiculous as it is dangerous and sophistical. He thinks that, because “the Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and practice”—one human deduction, at least, that he accepts—therefore a creed declaring and defining what is the sense of that rule is unnecessary. A man, not believing the Bible infallible, comes to Mr. McCune and applies for admission to his church. Mr. McCune repeats the “human deduction” that “the Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.” No “human deductions,” exclaims his friend; “confine yourself to the language of God as commonly received.” Mr. McCune appeals to the naked text. Who shall decide now whether the Bible is infallible or not? Or is a decision needed on so non-essential a matter? If a decision is made, the statement is a “human deduction”—a veritable creed. But no human creeds are allowed, and Mr. McCune’s friend, while accepting the texts, understands them in a different way. Will you receive me in Linwood and Mount Lookout, to the glory of God, as Christ has received me? cries his friend. Not if you don’t believe the Bible infallible, responds Mr. McCune. But, replies the other, Christ has received me; I believe in Christ, and my walk and conversation are as good as your own. Besides you have taught that a man may be a true Christian and “not believe the Bible infallible.” I had forgotten that, responds Mr. McCune; but come in, you give satisfactory scriptural evidence that Christ has received you, and though we differ in minor matters, we will extend to you “forbearance in love,” and not enforce our “mere peculiarities, contrary to conscience, as a matter of sectarian law.” Come in. Another steps up for admission, confessing, however, he does not believe in the true and proper

humanity of Christ. Will you receive me, to the glory of God? enquires his second friend. "The Son of God," says Mr. McCune, "became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul." No "human deductions," replies his friend; "confine yourself to the language of God, as commonly received." But that's what it means, says Mr. McCune. No "human modifications," again his friend insists. Mr. McCune appeals to the naked texts. His friend receives them, but understands them differently, and adds, You have taught, Mr McCune, that a man may be a true Christian and not believe in the humanity of Christ. Will you receive me? Christ has received me. Come in, says Mr. McCune, I had forgotten that article of our belief, but come in; you give satisfactory scripture evidence that Christ has received you, and though we differ on non-essentials, we will treat you "with forbearance in love." Next comes a friend who has doubts as to the Deity of Christ, and whom Mr. McCune refuses to call evangelical. Will you receive me, says he, to the glory of God, at Linwood and Mount Lookout? "Christ," says Mr. McCune, "was very God as well as very man." No "human deductions," retorts the Unitarian. Christ has received me. I believe the Bible is infallible, but understand it differently from you. Mr. McCune appeals to the texts. The Unitarian accepts the "language of God." Will you receive me? he cries. You are not "evangelical," says Mr. McCune. "Evangelical," exclaims his friend. If you admit one who does not believe in the humanity of Christ, how refuse me because I do not believe in the Deity of Christ? I believe in Christ without any human deductions, or inferences, or modifications. I understand the language of God differently from you. I believe with the Semi-Arians and three-fourths of the Christian Church in the fourth century. Will you receive me? Just at this point a Universalist steps up to solicit the same favor of admission to the church on the Mount. "They who die impenitent are lost forever," says Mr. McCune. No "human deductions," cries the Universalist. I believe that Christ has received me, and that none will be finally lost.

I accept all your texts ; you need not repeat them. Will you receive me ?

By what right, on what ground, I ask, granting Mr. McCune's creed of unexplained texts, can he refuse to receive the Unitarian and Universalist, while he cordially admits the man who neither believes the Bible is infallible, nor that Christ was truly and properly man ? Is it because Mr. McCune's human deductions are different from theirs ? But he has no right to any deductions in this matter whatever. Is it because they dispute those deductions ? But they accept the language of God. Is it because they don't accept the language of God as "commonly received ?" But neither does he who does not believe the Bible infallible, nor the true humanity of Christ, and yet Mr. McCune would receive them. Is it because they have no genuine New Testament creed ? They all say "the Bible is my creed." Is it because they are in a minority ? So was Athanasius and the Orthodox of the fourth century. I affirm, there is not an errorist in the list of them all, for eighteen centuries, that Mr. McCune's creed-theory can consistently reject, and I present the phenomenon of Mr. McCune as a Presbyterian minister for "ten years," advocating these views and announcing his purpose to continue their advocacy.

Mr. McCune's whole doctrine about creeds, is the doctrine of every heresiarch from the days of Arius and Pelagius to the present time. "The Bible is my creed," is the standing word in the mouth of every perverter of its truth. The Unitarian, the Socinian, the Universalist, the Swedenborgian all say, "the Bible is my creed." Every one of them will accept the naked texts without what Mr. McCune calls "human deductions." Mr. McCune's denial of the right of the Church to "enlarge" her creed, is the denial of her right to make any creed at all, for the right to make a creed involves the right to enlarge it, and the denial of the right to make is the denial of the right to enlarge. But what is the nature of this denial ? It is the denial of the church's right to make, as a church, a public confession of her faith in Christ, for the right to make a

creed is grounded in the right of confession. The Church must confess Christ, Mr. McCune will say, but she must not confess her *faith* in Christ, or tell what that faith is. She must confess distributively, *i. e.*, by her individual members, but not collectively and officially through her ministry, except in "the language of God." It is the denial of her right, as steward of the heavenly mysteries, to authoritatively decide, under the influence of a guiding Spirit, between what is truth and what is falsehood in the public teaching of her ministry, and to authoritatively bear witness in her own words, or testify on the stand as a witness-bearer does in his own language, what her understanding and belief are concerning the doctrine of God. It assails the office of the Church as a public teacher, witness and confessor of the truth; for the relation of the Church to the Bible is more than that of the preserver and guardian of the volume, and her mission, as a witness and instructor to the world, is more than that of a compiler of a few unexplained texts, or a *minimum quid* statement, the lowest and least expression on which a sinner may be saved. Her office is to furnish the *maximum quid* of her faith, the largest possible expression of her religious consciousness and belief, and to have relation, in her whole confession before men, not merely to the simple conditions of personal salvation, but to the whole compass of the divine plan, the whole sphere of the heavenly doctrine, and the whole extent of her work as a light in the world. The diadem of titles that adorn the brow of Christ, he has placed on the brow of his church. She is with him, her Divine Lord, the light, the witness, the prophet, the priest, the king, the life of the world.

Mr. McCune has not yet learned that the Bible is not a creed, and never can be any man's creed, and that this is the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, as it is of all Evangelical Protestantism. The case was never yet known in history, where a man boasted "the Bible is my creed," that the boast was not used as a shield of unevangelical views and doctrines, or a cloak for indifferentism and toleration of error. The Bible is no man's creed, and can be

no man's creed, for the Bible is the expression of God's will, whereas a creed is the expression of man's faith. Splendidly has Dr. Schaff, following the Reformed Divines, said, "The Bible is the word of God to man ; the creed is the answer of man to God. The Bible is the only sufficient Rule of Faith ; the Creed is the Rule of public doctrine derived from the Bible." It is no exaltation of human authority over the Divine word, but a subjection of the human understanding and faith to Divine truth, for the creed is ever and only, in the language of Reformers, *mensura mensurata*—the rule ruled—while the Bible is *mensura mensurans*—the rule ruling. So Dr. Krauth, in his "Conservative Reformation." The Rule of Faith is God's voice to us. Faith is the hearing of that voice. The Confession is our reply. To confess Christ is to confess *what* is our faith in Him. As the creed is not, and can not be, the Rule of Faith, but its confession, so the Bible, because it is the Rule of Faith, is, of necessity, not its confession. The Bible can no more be any man's creed than the stars can be any man's astronomy." This is the doctrine of our standards, underlying every expression I have quoted from them. It is not Mr. McCune's doctrine. And as to the outcry of Mr. McCune against the growth and enlargement of a creed, so far from this being a "Popish usurpation," and every argument in its defense a "falsity," and the thing itself "an unblushing assumption of Divine prerogative," if he will but read the Scriptures, he will find not only human-made Christian creeds in abundance, but, as Dr. Bannerman has well shown, that, even during the Apostolic age, "on three memorable occasions, the Church was compelled to recast and exhibit in new forms of language the truth formerly held, and compelled to do this because of the perversion to error and heresy of the terms formerly employed to set forth the truth." The Church of Christ, Vol. I., p. 292. What, then, becomes of the assertion of Mr. McCune, contradicted by every leaf of history, sacred and profane, that saving faith, *ipso facto*, excludes all fatal heresy, and that as the "brief creed" (!) of the Apostles was sufficient to exclude it in their day, "so it is sufficient now !" If it is answered

that inspired Apostles might make a creed, but not uninspired men, let Mr. McCune remember that the stream between Jerusalem and Gaza beheld the Abyssinian baptized by Philip upon the Abyssinian's own human-made creed; and let him further remember that not the fact of inspiration, but the pressing need of the Church, was the ground for creed-enlargement and restatement in Apostolic days, a need existing subsequently as well as then, and its supply warranted in every age by Apostolic practice. What had become of pure doctrine, on Mr. McCune's principle of no human creed, in the fourth century, when the Church, to use the words of Jerome, "woke up to find itself Arian?" or again, woke up to find itself Pelagian? or, in the sixteenth century, woke up to find itself Pagan? Were Athanasius, Augustin, Luther, Calvin, "unblushing usurpers of the Divine prerogative?" So teaches a Presbyterian minister who subscribes the Westminster Confession.

Mr. McCune charges the Presbyterian Church, in common with all other evangelical denominations, as being an oppressor of the conscience, because, by denominational law, she recognizes conformity to her standards, and binds them on her official ministry. It is a severe charge. But whose conscience is oppressed? Not mine. Not the conscience of any who sincerely adopt the standards. Does she oppress the conscience of the members of this Presbytery? Are what Mr. McCune calls her human deductions and inferences "contrary" to the word of God? She declares they are "*agreeable* to the word of God," and Mr. McCune has professed sincerely to adopt them as such. Has he yet to learn that what is deduced by good and necessary consequence from Scripture is Scriptural? Concede, if you will, that all other creeds are an oppression of the conscience, is our own amenable to that charge? The fundamentals of the Presbyterian Church are her creed, her standards, and nothing less, all professedly adopted and approved by Mr. McCune. Again, I ask, whose conscience is oppressed? The allegation betrays the fact of Mr. McCune's practical and avowed abandonment of the distinctive Creed, Government, and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church,

while yet remaining in her bosom, an abandonment began years ago. The Presbyterian Church repels the libel from the lips of her own son, to whom she has yielded almost boundless license, that she is an oppressor of the conscience. Never once has she interfered with his right of private judgment, even when insisting on her own rights of authoritative instruction, and on her right to interfere and restrain his public *conduct*. Never once has she said to any man, you *shall* adopt my creed, you *shall* submit to my government. What she has said is, if you can honestly and sincerely adopt and approve the Standards, then welcome here. If you can not, then let us remain apart in peace. The applicant for ministerial office can find another home more congenial among the people of God. But if the proposal is accepted, she demands that good faith shall be kept, and no "Trojan Horse" introduced within her walls to betray her. Mr. McCune pleads rights of conscience. Rights of conscience are not rights of membership. Rights of conscience are not rights to profess one thing and practice another. He pleads the right of private judgment. The right of private judgment is not the right of belonging to this Presbytery and advocating "no creed" and a polity at war with our Constitution. Detraction is not a right of private judgment. The Arian's right of private judgment gives him no right here. A man may have the right of private judgment and not be able to tell the difference between Presbyterianism and Popery. He may be a simpleton. The possession of the right does not confer the thing. A beggar may have a right to be rich and a foolish man to be wise, and yet the one remain poor, and the other a simpleton, all their days. A man may have the right to be a Presbyterian and yet be a Cardinal or Pope. Does the right of private judgment make him a Presbyterian, or does it give him a right to profess to be what he is not? or to be where he has no right to be? The right to membership in this Presbytery does not rest on the right of private judgment, nor on the right of conscience. It rests upon sincere and honest adoption and approval of her Standards, and upon the zealous and faithful maintaining the peace, purity, and

unity of the Church. It rests upon the solemnity of a personal vow that the man is a Presbyterian by conviction, and in heart, and not a mere wearer of the name, one-third Presbyterian, one-third Papal, and one-third Independent in his theories. A Presbyterian minister is a man whose Rule of Faith is the Word of God, and whose creed is the Westminster Standards. Is this Mr. McCune's description? I aver that if the ministry of the Presbyterian Church were allowed to teach and to do as Mr. McCune has been allowed to teach and to do, in reference to the question of creeds alone, and to traduce the denominational enactments and laws of their own Church as "sectarian," and as an oppression of the conscience, and publicly recommend the "striking out" of every thing that all other Christians "can not see to be law in Scripture," a generation would not pass away until the treacherous hand of organic union, preferring Union before Truth, had laid it in its grave. Already, by public utterance, he remands to what he calls "the broad and free domain of Christian liberty," under her no-creed system, every thing distinctively settled in the Presbyterian Standards, as to "man's relation to God's sovereignty, forms of making religious profession, modes of worship, subjects of Baptism, methods of organization, kinds and functions of Church-officers." He is looking for "greater light." Is this loyalty to the Presbyterian Church? Is this maintenance of her doctrine and order? "Strike out" all that, and how much is left of the Standards? I pass to the fourth Specification.

SPECIFICATION IV.

Vows of Ordination.

This Specification asserts the teaching of Mr. McCune to be that Presbyterian ministers, under solemn vows to study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church, are yet free to advocate views antagonistic to those they have vowed to maintain, and still remain in their ecclesiastical connexion, while they who object, should themselves retire from the body, if not content to indulge such liberty. The ever-varying axis of rotation for elders, ministers, and deacons,

upon such a principle, would reverse the ecclesiastical poles themselves. The ecclesiastical orbit, under such a theory, may be a circle, an ellipse, a parabola, or an infinitely unreturning hyperbola, and the minister himself become, in doctrine, like the comet-forms that sail and sweep the interplanetary spaces. According to Mr. McCune, a Presbyterian minister is at liberty, *after* his ordination, to hold "any views" he held before his ordination, and advocate the same. His doctrine is that ministerial vows are not binding. Under the manifestly sophistical form of expression, "the Church only asks men, at their ordination, what their *present views* are, and *never pledges them not to change their views*," he teaches that every Presbyterian minister may face about to the full extent of his own variations and yet remain in the body for the sake of indorsement and good standing. The clearly implied assertion is that such liberty is consistent with ministerial obligations. He suggests to an objector to his "views," "course," "scheme," "project," and "aim," that the proper solution of the objection is for the objector himself to retire. He proposes, with a cool temperature, that his name "*shall stand* on the roll of the Presbytery" as long as he is in its bounds. He declares that to ask a man not to advocate what he, an individual, believes to be God's truth, is to ask him to disobey God, and that if Presbytery requires him to renounce opinions and ways destructive in her judgment to the peace, unity, and purity of the Church, she will sit "in the Temple of God," and show herself "as God" over his conscience. He announces definitely for all time that he will never submit to such "usurpation of the Divine prerogative," and informs the court that he "proposes" still to advocate his peculiar views. He pleads the prestige his doctrines have won from the official circulation of them ordered by the Synod of Cincinnati in 1870, the first Synod after the Reunion, and seeks shelter behind that body as the ecclesiastical indorser of his Organic Union principles. He pleads the countenance and concurrence of this Presbytery. He says: "It is susceptible of proof that the advocacy of these Christian Union doctrines has been with

the knowledge and by the permission of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, and by the consent and with the co-operation of the Synod of Cincinnati, and that this advocacy is not in violation of any Presbyterian law whatever." Collateral No. 4. Such is the ground on which he establishes his claim to teach and preach his peculiar views, and advocate their necessary and legitimate consequences. Briefly stated, his doctrine is that ordination vows do not bind Presbyterian ministers, while remaining under them, not to become anti-Presbyterian, nor to abstain from the public proclamation of their new departures from the faith and order of the Church.

It is not the first time such license has been proclaimed in the world, but it is the first time, in the history of the Presbyterian Church, that any Presbyterian minister has ever dared publicly to utter such sentiments and remain unchallenged either by his Presbytery or Synod for "ten years." It is a feature of our times. It is non-enforcement, the result of the new non-excluding law of organization.

The vows of Mr. McCune are solemn and unambiguous. They are the vows of every Presbyterian minister, elder, and deacon—a solemn covenant between himself and the whole Presbyterian Church, and every individual officer in it, before which he stands charged to-day for breach of that covenant, Christ, his brethren, the Church, and the world, being witnesses. The vows of Mr. McCune in the United Presbyterian Church, of which he was a member, and which he took, expressly bound him to "adhere to the Westminster Standards, so long as he remained in that body. The vows of our own church bind to the same adherence every one of its ministers. Their education is to this end, as also their examinations, trials, licensure, ordination, and installation. They not only declare that they *"sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures,"* and that they "approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States," but they vow solemnly before God and the Presbytery to

“study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church,” and to be “zealous and faithful” in maintaining the same. Digest, pp. 399, 410, 411. All this, replies Mr. McCune, does not involve continued adherence to views professed at the time of ordination. He claims that “any views” a man may have entertained “*before*” he comes into the Church, he has a right to hold and advocate *after* he comes in.” (Spec. VI, Proof 3.) Moderator and brethren, all this pleading is worse than a quibble. It is evasion and bad faith. It is inconsistent with honor, truth, the precepts of the gospel, and loyalty to the Presbyterian Church. True, the Church does not pledge any minister “*not to change his views*,” but she does pledge him, in his vows of ordination, to “*study*” her “peace, unity, and purity,” to be “zealous and faithful in maintaining” these, as also in his vow to “submit” to her authority, to respect her “denominational laws,” and her “organic enactments,” which not only *require* the teaching of her doctrine and polity, but *forbid* the teaching of anything contrary thereto. He is not at liberty publicly to exclaim against her distinctive tenets and laws as sinful sectarianism, and deny her right of distinctive existence. He is not at liberty to advocate the dropping off of her Presbyterian peculiarities for the sake of “Organic Union.” They are not “mere peculiarities;” they are vital to her system and to the truth of God. No. Vows do not bind any man “*not to change*” his views, but a change of views does bind every honorable man to ask a release from the vows he took to advocate the old views he has now abandoned, and not to advocate the new ones he has embraced. Apply Mr. McCune’s views of liberty to the oaths of Federal and State officers to support the National Constitution, and to our Theological Professors to maintain the Standards of the Church, and then imagine the result! The doctrine is treason in both cases. It was for the purpose of binding to adherence and non-departure from sound doctrine our Standards were adopted by the fathers of the Presbyterian Church in this land. It was in the overture of John Thompson, a sire, for aught I know, of the respected elder you have put on this Committee of

Prosecution, and at a time when the infant Church had no written Constitution, in 1728, preliminary to the Adopting Act, that he besought the General Synod "to publicly and authoritatively adopt the Westminster Confession and Catechisms," and then "to oblige every Presbytery within their bounds to oblige every candidate for the ministry to acknowledge, *coram Presbyterio*, the said Confession of Faith, and next, "to promise not to teach or preach anything contrary to it." Baird's Digest, 29. Did this mean non-adherence? The Constitution was adopted and the vows were taken. Is contemporaneous exposition an authority? Is the uniform practice of the Church an authority? Non-adherence! What means the act of 1758, "strictly enjoining it on all our members and probationers for the ministry that they preach and teach according to the form of sound words in said Confession and Catechism, and avoid and oppose all errors contrary thereto," and if their consciences will not permit them to allow any matter determined by the major vote of the Presbyterian Church, to "peaceably withdraw." Digest, p. 48. What means the solemn pledge which, in 1819, the Presbyterian Church imposed upon her Theological Professors, to whom she was about to intrust the training of her ministry? Was it consistent with non-adherence? Does it allow Professors to drop off the distinctive features of Presbyterian doctrine and polity in their instruction, or encourage her ministry in a disorganizing course she would not herself tolerate for a moment? I will repeat it. "In the presence of God and of the Directors of this Seminary, I do solemnly and *ex animo* adopt, receive, and subscribe the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as the Confession of my Faith, or as a summary and just exhibition of that system of religious belief which is contained in Holy Scripture, and therein revealed by God to man for his salvation; and I do solemnly, *ex animo*, profess to receive the Form of Government of said Church as agreeable to the inspired oracles. And I do solemnly promise and engage not to inculcate, teach, or insinuate anything which shall appear to me to contradict or contra-

vene, either directly or impliedly, anything taught in the said Confession of Faith or Catechism, nor to oppose any of the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church Government, while I shall continue a Professor in this Seminary." Digest, p. 377. Why bind her instructors so strictly unless that she might also have a ministry trained, without equivocation, to the faithful maintenance of her Standards? What means the act of 1825, that "ministers who manifested a decided hostility to ecclesiastical creeds, confessions, and formularies," shall also "withdraw?" Digest, p. 55. Does it mean non-adherence? What means the vested right of the Presbytery, inscribed in the Constitution, "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church," *i. e.*, which conflict with the solemn vows to study and maintain that purity and peace, in matters of doctrine and order, if it does not mean adherence to the Standards? What means that other positive obligation on the Synod to compel the Presbyteries to "preserve" and enforce the Constitution, which is the sole bond of our union; and that other of the Assembly to deal with every Presbytery and Synod derelict herein? Digest, pp. 144, 191, 218. But I forbear to expand the law references on this point.

The doctrine of Mr. McCune as to non-adherence, with liberty to remain in the body, is twin-sister of his doctrine of non-enforcement. It is disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church, intensified by the lordly utterance, "It is useless to make any intimations to me on this subject. I *propose* that my name shall stand on the roll of this Presbytery so long as I remain in Cincinnati or vicinity."

One other remark germane to this point. It is the habit of the advocates of so-called "liberty" in teaching the Presbyterian faith and order, to plead that in their vows of ordination they only subscribe to a "*system*" of doctrine as "contained" in the confession. The emphasis is put upon the word "*system*." Mr. McCune has used it abundantly. It is a grievous misfortune for Mr. McCune in the first place that even this shelter for his new doctrines will not avail him, for he holds that denominations, as such, are "essen-

tially sinful," and have no scriptural right either to a distinctive "system" of doctrine or to a distinctive existence. Upon his own showing, he has no right even to take a vow to maintain a distinctive "system" of doctrine, let alone objecting to the doctrines of the system! He is utterly opposed to "human deductions," system or no system. To plead that he will maintain the distinctive system he declares has no right to exist, because the denomination it represents has none, is simply to convict himself of self-contradiction. If he maintains the "system" has a right to exist, then the denomination built on that system has a right to exist also. If he maintains the denomination, as such, has no right to exist, then the system goes along with it. Either way the interpleader is vain.

But, granting Mr. McCune the benefit of his contradiction, how can ordination vows bind to maintain the "system" of doctrine, and not bind to maintain the "doctrines of the system?" A "system of doctrine" is a science of doctrine, all whose parts are organically related, each one of whose doctrines is necessary to the integrity of the system, and all which are inseparably linked with the fundamental principles and facts on which it rests. The system of doctrine in its integrity is the sum total of the doctrines of the system organically bound together.* To explain away the doctrines, is to impair the integrity of the system. To impair the integrity of the doctrines is to impair the integrity of the system. How can Mr. McCune advocate the doctrines he holds, and yet claim that he holds to the system of doctrine, and so keep his vows inviolate? It is impossible. If, by non-adherence, you take away one doctrine, you may take away two; if two, you may take away ten;

* It was argued, and confidently asserted, by Mr. McCune and many others in Presbytery, that the last twelve chapters of our Confession do not belong to, and make no part of our "system of doctrine," and that Dr. Charles Hodge, of Princeton, so teaches, in the Princeton Review; and that, *therefore*, Mr. McCune's peculiar views about the Nature of the Church, the Covenant of God with believers, Infant Baptism, Infant Church-membership, the binding and perpetual obligation of the Sacraments, etc., etc., *did not impair the integrity of our system!* I deem it but just to the name of Dr. Hodge, to append this note, by way of protest against the perversion of his words so persistently made in order to find a shelter and defense for Mr. McCune.

if ten, the whole. Can a man who denies that a plurality of congregations, organically bound under one ecclesiastical rule, is "a church," maintain the integrity of our system of polity? He denies the polity itself. Can a man who holds that the "body of Christ" is the "visible church," that infants of believers are not members of the church, that infant baptism as a *covenant* transaction is to be repudiated, that unbaptized persons may become members of the church, that a man may be a christian and not believe either the infallibility of the Bible or proper humanity of Christ, or who remands to the broad domain of liberty, "modes of worship, subjects of baptism, methods of organization, kinds and functions of church officers," and denies the scriptural right of Presbyterianism, as such, can such an one, when called to account, put in the interpleader, Oh! I did not bind myself "not to change my views," I vowed only to maintain the system of Presbyterian doctrine, not everything in the confession? Moderator, he neither holds the system of doctrine, nor the doctrines of the system. And it is a vain excuse to plead conscience, private judgment, and a liberty "unchallenged" for a decade of years. I can not forbear to quote the admirable words of Dr. Krauth on this subject, "If a man," says he, "were examined as a candidate for a chair of astronomy in a university, and were asked, 'What is your astronomical system?' and were to answer, 'I accept the teaching of the stars,' the reply would be, 'You may think you do; so does the man who is sure that the stars move round the world, and that they are not orbs, but gimlet holes to let the glory through! We wish to know *what* you hold the teaching of the stars *to be*? Do you receive, as in harmony with them, the results reached by Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Laplace, and Herschel, or do you think the world one great flat, and the sun and moon mere pendants to it?' 'Gentlemen,' replies the independent investigator, 'the theories of astronomers are human-made systems—man-made theories. I go out every night on the hills and look at the stars, as God made them, through a hole in my blanket, with my own good eyes, not with a man-made telescope or fettered by a man-made theory; and I believe in the stars and in what they teach

me, but if I were to say or write what they teach me, *that would be a human-made creed, and I am opposed to all creeds.*' 'Very well,' reply the examiners, 'we wish you a good pair of eyes, and feel it unnecessary to go any further. If you are unwilling to *confess* your faith, we will not tax your conscience with the inconsistency of *teaching* that faith, nor tax our own with the hazard of authorizing you to set forth, in the name of the stars, your own ignorant assumptions about them.' Conservative Reformation, p. 167. Think of an astronomer pledged to teach the Newtonian system, pleading Mr. McCune's argument! Think of a Presbyterian minister pledged to teach the "old ancestral Calvinism," the Standards, "pure and simple," the Calvinistic system, asserting that he does teach that "system," and so keeps his ordination vows, while yet pleading "the Bible is my creed," "I have a right to change my views," and still remain unchallenged on the roll of the Presbytery! Were commercial business to be transacted on such interpretations of promises to pay, the whole community would be wrecked. There is not a business man in the world who would loan to another an amount of money, under such a liberty of interpretation, and ever expect one dollar of it to return to his hands. I pass to the fifth specification.

SPECIFICATION V.

Plurality of Official Membership.

This specification reveals a new planet in the ecclesiastical heavens, and one of baneful omen. It is an admitted fact that every planet in our system affects the motions of every other planet, and the same is true of every denomination. When Uranus was discovered, it was found there was something still affecting its motions, and the suggestion was made that a planet beyond itself was in existence. Thanks to the observations of Adams and Le Verrier, and the superior Berlin star-map, Neptune was discovered whirling his way in the skies, only two billion seven hundred thousand miles away from the central sun. The disturbances of our Presbyterian planet here have awakened similar suspicions, and all eyes have been on the Lookout to discover, if possible, the reason of the perturbations.

Your Committee of Prosecution announce that a new denomination exists, much nearer to ours than Neptune to the sun, and that its singular and contradictory law of motion is this, that it moves in the orbits of every other while yet claiming to move in one of its own. "Anti-denomination" is its denomination. "Official Plurality" is its law. It is an ecclesiastical phenomenon. Never before, in history, was such a thing known—never before in morals. It is an absorber and disorganizer; an absorber in that it feeds upon all the rest—a disorganizer in that it denies their right to exist, accounting all creeds but its own heretical and schismatical. It moves in the hazy atmosphere of "Organic Church Union." One of its chief creators in these parts is Mr. McCune. If not a creation *ex nihilo*, it is a development *ex materia præexistente*, and is claimed to be the Darwinian fittest to survive. The stride of progress is immense, wider than the steps of Homer's gods in space. The inhabitants of all other church planets are called upon to keep one foot in their own denomination and plant the other in the new, claiming still that they are lawful denizens of both. If any choose to make the full spring at once, all well; but dismissed or undismitted, it makes no difference. For private members and public ministers, two consciences, two private judgments, two conflicting obligations, two communions, two creeds, two opposing jurisdictions, two antagonizing denominations, plurality of membership and plurality of office. This is the doctrine publicly advocated by Mr. McCune. It is the law of a strange progeny, bad in ethics, self-ruinous in practice, condemned in Scripture. It is the central device of the new movement whereby its advocates hope to forestall the recoil of their own principle upon themselves; an ingenious hold-on-and-let-go expedient of defense against the reproach of disorganization; a last-born plea wherewith to refute or parry the charge, that while professing to oppose all distinctive denominations they are caught in the very act of adding one more to the list. In the case of Mr. McCune, it is the profession of adherence while practicing non-adherence to the Presbyterian faith and order—a quicksand foundation on which to build his claims to

remain on the roll of his Presbytery while still teaching that it is an unauthorized and extra-scriptural body. The mystery of the organization of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout church of undissolved church members, and the equal mystery of the claim of Mr. McCune, as an enrolled member of the new anti-denominational association of ministers and independent churches, to not sever his denominational relations, is completely solved. This double back-acting and forward-acting motion at one and the same step is the law of the new enterprise and a fact in ecclesiology unknown before.

The fact of a new organization is abundantly evinced by the proofs under the specification. The extensive appeal signed by Mr. McCune and his co-laborators in organic union, and made to "all the Christian ministers and churches in North America," to begin the organization of the New Testament Church, is now in court, and on your table. The evidence of the call and action of three general conventions at New York, Cincinnati, and Suffolk, Va., in this interest, over one of which Mr. McCune presided as chairman, is here. The additional evidence of organization and subscription to the "New Basis," is taken from Mr. McCune's own paper, the *work done* in that behalf being left for consideration under the Second Charge. The recognition of the Texas "plan of organization" as one with the Cincinnati and Suffolk movement, establishes the fact of "organization" beyond a question. You will observe carefully the dates, and the progress of the work: first, the "Address to all Christian Ministers and Churches in North America," signed by Mr. McCune and others, Oct., 1874, page 13 of the case; second, the three general conventions respectively at New York, Cincinnati, and Suffolk, Va., Oct., 1873, 1874, and 1875, page 15 of the case; third, the language of the Christian Unity, resumed under the triple editorship of Dr. Wellons, Mr. McCune and Mr. Melish, saying, "The Christian Unity begins its career (again) with fixed purposes and aims, etc.," and "*we must organize, band ourselves together as ministers and churches, etc.*," Aug. 1875, p. 15 of the case; fourth, the response of Mr. McCune to Mr. Thrall admitting the "*organizing by actual visible oneness*," Aug. 1875, page

15 of the case; fifth, the actual, visible organization of Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, and the publication of its basis to the world, Dec. 1875, pp. 14 and 27 of the case. The "project," scheme and "aim," and actual "organization" are beyond peradventure, both as to a General Association of Ministers and Churches, and as to a particular, actual and visible organization, where all evangelical Christians were to be received, of every denomination, the Gospel preached, candidates trained for the ministry, and ministers sent out into the world. I have established the fact. I have given the data of the approach and visible outstanding existence of the new planet in our hemisphere. The remainder of the testimony I need not go over. The "initial step" of the visible embodiment of the organic union principles in the new anti-denominational denomination is expressly shown to be the actual reception of Christians into a separate, independent and particular society.

The law of this organization is as already described. Ministers, dismissed or undismissed from their old denominational relations, are received. "Any minister who has adopted this Basis, *but does not deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations, shall, at his own request, be enrolled, notwithstanding.*" Such is the law. "Notwithstanding" what? Notwithstanding his solemn vows and obligations to the denomination where he belongs: Signature to the Basis, and enrollment, constitute him, *ipso facto*, a standing member in the new Association. But signatures and enrollments have already been made. The organization, the "banding ourselves together," with the "Basis," as a bond of union, is a historical fact. What shall I call this law of plurality, of individual ministerial membership in two antagonizing organizations—this double allegiance, genuine in the one case and spurious in the other? Will historic congregational "usage," or Dexter, or the Boston platform, cover it? Not exactly. Is it the new Oberlin departure of 1871 abandoning its Westminster banner precisely for such a thing as this? Then we know indeed what the character of that new departure is. Is it anarchy? Will Presbyterian usage cover it? Not exactly. The same limitations are found here also. Will "Independent Presbyter-

ianism " cover it ? Not exactly. The thing is a phenomenon. What shall I call it, this advocacy of plural and antagonizing responsibilities, the profession of loyalty and sincerity in all, while the last aim at the ruin of the first ? When I say it is a " Trojan Horse " introduced into this Presbytery, I say all that need be said. The moral character of that transaction speaks for itself. " Timeo Danaos *et* dona ferentes ! " When I affirm that such a law of double and conflicting jurisdiction is advocated by a Presbyterian minister, with the express aim of depreciating the distinctive peculiarities of his own denomination, I affirm that it is morally wrong, and no ingenuity can harmonize it with an honest and sincere adoption of our Standards. It is disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church. Whether in the case of ministers or private members, to act upon such a principle is to break covenant, and violate both ordination and sacramental vows.

But this claim to double-membership, whether official or private, is ridiculous, as well as morally wrong. If a communicant may be a member of two churches at the same time, the same principle will allow him to be a member of three, and of as many more as he pleases, *provided, always*, the new divine law of organization, " Receive ye one another," is understood by all according to Mr. McCune's interpretation ! If a minister may belong to two different organizations at the same time, he may belong to a dozen. If he may join the new organic union organization of " Christian Union Churches," he may become a standing member in the house of Bishops, one in the Methodist Conference as well, one in the Baptist Association too, and a member of the Presbyterian General Assembly besides. There is no limit. His blooming honors thick upon him, he may run and radiate through the whole circle of denominations, *provided, always*, they would " receive " him, as he would " receive " them. If ejected from one, his standing would be good in all the rest. Besides, once in, they have no right to exclude him. He can remain on their roll. It is such a privilege Mr. McCune advocates—the privilege that a United States senator should be a member of the British Parliament, of the Reichsrath of King William,

and of the French Chambers at the same time; the privilege that the autocrat of all the Russias should be President of the United States, King of Italy, Sultan of Turkey, and Hospodar of Bosnia, all under different oaths, laws, and governments, and yet advocating allegiance and obedience to all at the same time. True, he has the prevision that under the operation of such a rule, denominations would soon disappear; but, meanwhile, till that millennium comes, this plurality of contrary membership is to be indulged, in hope that thus the Savior's prayer may soon be answered, the world converted, and denominations be ready to vanish away.

But the Presbyterian Church will not allow this duplicity of membership, self-contradictory and suicidal to the church, its individual members and ministers together. Ministerial and sacramental vows, moral consistency, covenant obligations, the already quoted organic enactments of the church, which I need not repeat, are all against it. In the case of private members, "willful absence" from the regular ministrations to attendance on which they are solemnly pledged, the absenting themselves from and refusing to support the church to which they belong, "is a disciplinable offense, and upon its occurrence discipline is enjoined." Digest, p. 494. The confession of a "change of views" is no defense against the sin of "having violated covenant by continued absence from the ordinances of the church." p. 494. Attendance upon another church is no excuse, for the delinquent is still a member. The plea that he has joined another church, without dismissal, in the region where his own exists, is not allowed, for it is a disorderly withdrawal and an irregular connection. "No church member can ever properly cease to be such, except by *death, exclusion, a regular dismissal, or an orderly withdrawing* to join some other denomination." p. 625. "To withdraw from a use of his privileges as a member, *cither by irregularly connecting himself with another denomination, or by going to a distant part of the world, etc., without making known his removal to the church session, and asking for a certificate for the purpose of enjoying occasional communion elsewhere, or of dismissal to join some other church, is itself a*

censurable violation of the principles of church fellowship, and may infer suspension from its privileges." pp. 625, 626. The law of our church is very clear, and its application to the principle and case before us is inevitable. For church members to join another organization without dismissal from the church to which they belong, so absenting themselves willfully from the organization and ministrations they are under covenant obligations to support, is an evil example, a breaking of covenant, a censurable violation of the principles of church fellowship, an offense upon which discipline is enjoined, and may infer suspension from the church. These are some of the "denominational laws" and "organic enactments" Mr. McCune would like to have out of the way. Double-membership is not allowed. If the parents do this, what will the children do? What kind of a church shall we have the next generation?

In the case of a public minister, the argument is *a fortiori*. If a private church member may not be guilty of such license, much more a Presbyterian minister may not encourage him in the same. If the Standards of the church condemn it, the officer under vows to maintain the Standards may not be a party to the propagation of doctrines at variance herewith, nor a party to the censurable irregularity. If a private individual may not assume a double-membership, much more a public officer under vows to exercise discipline in such cases may not himself be guilty of advocating or doing the same. If *not* in the member, *much more not* in the minister. The Presbyterian Church orders that any of her ministers who have joined another ecclesiastical association or another denomination are to be "stricken from the roll, if not chargeable with fundamental error in doctrine or immorality in life." Digest, pp. 109, 620. She will not allow ministers of another association to belong to her own at the same time, nor her own to belong to another. Others who come to her fold must bring letters of dismissal and good standing. Plurality of official membership in different denominations she will not permit. The plea of "non-withdrawal" from her own body, while uniting with another, she will not tolerate, and

could not, for it is the very gravamen and core of the transgression itself. It is a plea for double and conflicting jurisdiction, double and conflicting allegiance, under creeds, laws, vows, and obligations mutually contradictory, and destructive of her peace, unity, and purity as a church; and putting out of sight altogether the question of a pastoral relation to a particular church "outside of her jurisdiction," the personal presence in Presbytery and non-withdrawal of a minister, himself under two distinct allegiances—one Presbyterian, the other Independent—mutual contradiction in polity, a regular officer in one denomination standing and claiming the right to be enrolled in another, is no argument in his vindication. It is the very substance and essence of the offense itself, making the violation of obligations of loyalty to the distinctive faith and order of his church its own justification. He says to the one organization, "I'm on your side," and to the other organization, "I'm on your side." He can not be true to both. Plurality of official relation here is insincerity. He can not sincerely "adopt," "approve," and "maintain" the distinctive faith and order of the Presbyterian Church with a good conscience or "singleness of heart," either toward God or man. Such double dealing, were it generally accepted as a rule of action by our ministers, would bring the Presbyterian Church, first to contempt and at last to ruin. It is the natural fruit and legitimate consequence of the newly invented "divine law of organization." The organic unity that gives birth to a principle like this is simply organic duplicity. The tree is bad. It is known by its fruits. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles.

I pass to the sixth specification.

SPECIFICATION VI.

Terms of Ministerial Membership.

The doctrine charged in this specification is that no Presbytery has any right to exclude from its official membership any Christian minister, no matter to what denomi-

nation he belongs, but that every Christian minister is, *ipso facto*, entitled to a seat in any Presbytery, to a pastorate in any church, and to any position of office and trust the church may have to offer. This title is said to rest upon a “right” to official membership. This “right” is said to rest upon the simple fact that a man is a “*Christian minister*.” His *call* to the ministry is assumed as the ground of the right, and no other test of ministerial qualification is allowed, save assent to a “few leading truths,” “expressed in God’s own language,” without any “human deductions” or “inferences” therefrom, or any human “modifications.” The simple fact that he assents to a few unexplained texts, as his creed, is a Christian man, and wants to be in the Presbyterian Church, is enough. He must be admitted to the Presbytery. If he is an Independent, denying our ascending series of courts, and the right of one ecclesiastical rule over many congregations organically bound together, and the right of such organization to be called “a church,” he is nevertheless to be admitted. If he is a Prelate, asserting apostolical succession, three orders in the ministry, repudiating the parity of the clergy, and disputing the ordination of his brethren, he must be admitted. If he is a Lutheran, proclaiming consubstantiation and the ubiquity of Christ’s body, he must be admitted. If he is a Baptist, denying infant baptism, infant church membership, and asserting immersion, he must be admitted. If he is a Quaker, repudiating external sacraments as signs and seals of the covenant of grace, he must be admitted. If he is a Semi-Pelagian or Arminian, the one advocating a theology that starts from the principle of human agency and only introducing the Divine as a synergistic help to the sinner, the other advocating a theology that denies the absolute election of men to eternal life, and affirming their salvation only on the condition of foreseen good works and faith, both must be admitted. Apollinarian, admitting that Christ had a human body and soul, but denying that he had a human spirit; Nestorian, sundering the natures of Christ and teaching a double personality; Eutychian, absorbing the human in the Divine and compounding a new person-

ality—all must be admitted. The Calvinistic Church has no right to distinctively exist as a separate denomination. The distinctive tenets of faith and order, achieved after long conflict, consecrated in the Westminster Standards, and bound upon the official ministry of our church, are to be remanded to the category of indifference because the “new divine law of organization” is grounded in a text that relates to things indifferent. In other words, and precisely, denominations are “essentially sinful,” and should be abolished, the Presbyterian with the rest, the Court of Christ turned into a plain of Shinar with a new Babel as its tower, no man surrendering anything, each one enjoying free speech, the rights of conscience accorded and exercised to the last breath, a “*Concordia Discors*” of mutual “forbearance in love,” a “*Campus Martius*” of conflicting beliefs and policies, an amphitheater of belligerent priesthood, anointed for the combat, but not with Aaron’s oil, “brethren” dwelling together in “Organic Unity,” where no dew of Hermon descends, and where the Lord commands no blessing, but spiritual death forevermore. Behold! Is it “good and pleasant,” this Organic Church Union? It is built on a “new divine law of organization,” which entitles every Christian minister, *ipso facto*, to a seat in any Presbytery or conference in Christendom. It is like the under world, the Grave, as Blair describes it:

“’Tis here all meet:
The shivering Icelander and sunburnt Moor,
Men of all climes that never met before,
And of all creeds.”

Its name is “Legion,” for it is many. Multitude is its motto. Indifference its creed. It is the toleration of the Grave. It is the warfare of the shades. It is the extravaganza of supreme folly.

Have the committee misrepresented the defendant? Read the proofs. Read the bold declaration, dogmatic and authoritative, squarely made in face of the excluding law of our Standards, that “any Christian minister has a right to membership” in this or any other Presbytery, no matter what his peculiar creed; that he is both “eligible” and

“entitled” to “every privilege” and “every position” implied in such membership, whether pastor, teacher of theology or church government, with free speech unchecked, and full power to “imbue the whole denomination” with his views, and that any one who dares to ask him not to advocate his antagonisms to our Standards usurps the “Throne of the Lord God Omnipotent.” Read the double mockery of a liberalism that scorns to even respect the vow that binds to reverence and defense of our organic law, and sneers at our “beautiful consistency” and “delightful fellowship.” Is this loyalty to the Presbyterian Church? Is there “some difference of opinion” here? How long would the church survive were such a course generally allowed? Is the claim of a plenary indulgence to spread abroad unchallenged for “ten years,” such palpable contradiction of the Presbyterian Church, by sermon, paper, lecture, and debate, while receiving thousands from her funds, and subverting her order, an argument in defense of loyalty to the church and to ministerial vows? Is the license of unrebuked abuse against members of this Presbytery who have sought by milder measures to arrest this revolutionary liberty, so long indulged, or the plea that a personal defense of our faith and order against such doctrine was a persecution of the defendant, or that conscience consecrates the right of a Presbyterian officer to revolt against his standard and yet remain undisciplined, is this a demonstration that our terms of ministerial fellowship are sinfully sectarian and should be blotted out? Moderator and brethren, your Committee are of one mind that our denomination, and our ministry, have been brought into contempt by the necessity that has demanded this judicial process.

The doctrine of ministerial non-exclusion from the Presbyterian Church, advocated by Mr. McCune, rests, as I have said, upon what he calls a “right” of inclusion, and that so-called right rests upon the simple fact that the applicant is a Christian minister. In other words, an assumed call to the ministry, *ipso facto*, entitles to membership in this Presbytery. Under the toleration, in our midst, of such a

sentiment, and with the old rule for the examination of ministers suppressed, who may not now knock at our door, or if knocking be refused admission? Is this our boasted Reunion? The doctrine of Mr. McCune is that, precisely as a private Christian has, *ipso facto*, a right to be in any Presbyterian Church, no matter what his opposition to Presbyterianism may be, and no matter how calculated, by talent or otherwise, to make trouble in our house, so any Christian minister has, *ipso facto*, a right to be in this Presbytery, no matter how opposed to our Standards. The plain English is, our Standards have no right to exist. It is no misrepresentation of the defendant. The doctrine has been publicly advocated for ten years, and is well known. The proofs are abundant and specific. Our polity is sinful—that's what it means. It is a "Wedge of Division," an "Apple of Discord," an "Achan in the Camp."

It will be enough that your Committee refer, without comment, to our law which Mr. McCune has so persistently opposed. The Presbyterian Church condemns the doctrines of Mr. McCune, and affirms that, as a guardian of the Truth of God, she *has* a right to exclude from her ministerial communion any minister who refuses to adopt the standards she has declared to be agreeable to the Word of God. In most express language, she declares her own inability to depart from the same, unless by "abandonment" of the Word of God itself. Her convictions are unalterable. Her judgment is the latest and ripest conclusion of all the contests in the Church of Christ for eighteen memorable centuries. She affirms, in common with every other branch of the Church, from which in many things she differs, that she is "*entitled to declare the terms of admission*" into her own communion, and the "*qualifications*" of her own ministers, and in such manner "that the faith once delivered to the saints be kept pure and uncorrupt among us, and so handed down to our posterity." Digest, pp. 44, 45. She does it all for the sake of the "Heavenly Doctrine," of more value than any organic union in earth or Heaven, and under a profound sense of her responsibility to Christ, the Head of the Church. She does exclude, and this is part of

her fidelity, historic glory, and blessing. She has inscribed her terms of admission in her standards, by requiring a sincere adoption, approval, and zealous maintenance of those standards, and of her peace, unity, and purity, bound up with such adoption, approval, and maintenance. Digest, pp. 48 (1), 49 (6), 55 (1, 2, 3). She is not a voluntary association, nor a Christian Commission, nor an irresponsible Council. She is a Divine Foundation, under law to Christ, accountable for the light she diffuses, or the darkness she spreads upon the world. She imposes solemn vows on all her officers, ministers, elders, and deacons to adhere to what she believes God's word to be. Digest, pp. 399, 410, 411. She therefore excludes all ministers who can not accept her standards. p. 57 (14). Churches that repudiate her polity can not be received or retained. pp. 62 (2), 92 (II, 2). She binds herself to the Calvinistic system. p. 85 (4.) By her Reunion covenant she makes her Confession of Faith a perpetual bond, and demands a positive approval of her polity. p. 91 (2). She requires that all her ministers shall teach according to her standards. p. 148. She strikes from her roll all those that join other denominations. pp. 620 (7), 169 (8.) She insists upon the "enforcement" of her standards. p. 191 (IV). She subjects to discipline all who traduce them. p. 54. She repudiates Mr. McCune's "human deduction," drawn from the language of God. Rom. 15:7, p. 45. She wants no new Confession. p. 73. She will unite with none, organically, except upon the "Basis of the Standards." pp. 45-48. Is it possible for her to be more explicit in her condemnation of the doctrine of Mr. McCune, a doctrine which is a point-blank impeachment of the very terms of fellowship on which he was received into her ministerial communion? I place the responsibility where it belongs. I submit that a bolder assault upon the Presbyterian Church, or a more defiant propagation of errors, destructive of her existence as a denomination, a more intelligently aimed stroke at her fundamental and vital doctrine, by any of her ministers, never was known in all her history. No other cases in the Digest will compare with it. The disastrous effect of this propagation for "ten years"

in this region can not be calculated. I appeal to living proof. It has been almost as much as a minister's reputation is worth to dare to stand up and resist the spirit under which this liberalism and lawlessness enjoyed their triumphal march. And with their eyes full upon the facts, and opening wider with astonishment at every step, your Committee are of one mind, that such a doctrine as the one in this single specification, and so clearly proved, and pregnant with such measureless consequences, is, of itself, amply strong to sustain the weight of the whole general charge. I pass to the seventh specification.

SPECIFICATION VII.

Infant Church Membership Denied.

This specification charges Mr. McCune with the public denial of the doctrine of infant church membership, and the affirmation of the counter-doctrine, that the visible Church on earth is simply a company of regenerate believers. He holds that the doctrine of infant church-membership is to be repudiated as a High Church theory, the child of a sacramentarian dogma, which mediates the grace of Christ through an apostolic succession and the outward performance of sacramental rites and ceremonies. The "offspring" of believers, or of professing Christians, are thrown outside of God's covenant with the Church, and upon which the Church rests. "A Christian Church," says he, "is a Church of Christians, an assembly of believers, a company of regenerate souls." The inclusion of their "children," he tells us, "is not a part of the common faith." His principle of Organic Union, built upon his interpretation of Rom. 15: 7, "excludes all baptized children from church-membership who can not give satisfactory scriptural evidence that they are Christians;" *i. e.*, it excludes all infants. His language is as unmistakable here as elsewhere. He says: "*I utterly repudiate the doctrine of infant church membership.*" "Unbelieving, unconverted children" are not members of the visible Church, even though their parents are in church covenant with God. It is "a

High Church theory." He would baptize an infant, but not recognize that Baptism as a covenant sign and seal of grace, nor the infant as having any Church right to Baptism. Baptism, as a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, is only to be administered to regenerate souls, and this not upon a credible *profession* of their faith, but upon a credible "*evidence*" of faith; *i. e.*, evidence regarded as "satisfactory" to human judgment that a person is truly regenerate. To crown all, and strengthen his assertions, he assumes to speak authoritatively, and declare to the world that "*the Presbyterian Church has ceased to enforce Infant Baptism.*" These views of Mr. McCune betray, in an unmistakable manner, his true position, both as to doctrine and order. They rest upon a mutilation of the Abrahamic covenant, an identification of the "visible Church" with the "Body of Christ," an actual expulsion of the offspring of believers from their rights, the substitution in the case of adults of "*credible evidence* of faith" for a "*credible profession* of faith," and the theory that the terms of visible church-membership are identical with the terms of salvation, or membership in the "Body of Christ."

Before passing to the law of our Standards, I desire to quote the singularly appropriate words of Dr. Bannerman, to whose admirable work I have already referred. Having established the clear distinction between the visible and invisible Church, or the "visible Church" and the "Body of Christ," he says: "The principles in regard to the visible and invisible Church, already indicated, have a very important bearing on the question of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of Infant Baptism." "The doctrine of the visible Church and its external relationship to Christ *lays the foundation* for those views of church-membership which justify us in regarding the infants of professing Christians to share in the communion and privileges of the Church." "The Independent view, which insists on the possession of a saving faith in Christ as the *only* footing on which church-membership can be conceded, and the only title to the enjoyment of church ordinances, tends very directly, if consistently carried out, to deprive the infants of professing

Christians of their right to be regarded as members of the Church, or to claim the benefits of its ordinances." Again, speaking of the Presbyterian terms of Communion, "a credible *profession* of faith," and a "corresponding life and conduct," he says: "The Independents demand something more than this. Positive *evidence* of a credible kind that a man is a true believer, and savingly united to Christ, is alone held to be sufficient warrant to admit him to a Christian Society, the work of grace effected in his soul being accounted the *only ground* and condition of *church-membership*. The difference between the principles of Presbyterians and Independents is broad and fundamental. With Independents, a *saving belief* in Christ is the only title of admission to the Christian Society. With Presbyterians, on the other hand, an intelligent *profession of belief in the gospel* is the title to admission to church-membership. The Independent system of church-membership is founded on a denial of the distinction between the visible and invisible Church of Christ." Church of Christ, Vol. I, pp. 36, 73. I think these quotations from so standard an authority, taken in connection with Mr. McCune's words, leave no room for doubt that Mr. McCune is not a Presbyterian, but an Independent, under a Presbyterian name, and can not, and does not, either adopt the system of doctrine in our Confession, or the system of polity in our Discipline. Brownism is not more radical.

Mr. McCune can not plead ignorance of our standards, however much he may plead "indifference," for he has studied them on this point, only to deny their doctrine, publicly, before the Evangelical Ministerial Association of Cincinnati, and spread the denial broadcast through the *Commercial* of May 9, 1876, even after the Presbytery had appointed its Investigating Committee, April 13, 1876, at Glendale. See Proof and Spec. XI., Proof 2. He quotes the standards only to assail them before others, and affirm that on this question they are no part of the common faith. Our law asserts that the "universal church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make *profession* of the holy religion of Christ, and of

submission to his laws." Digest, p. 107. "A particular church" it defines to "consist of a number of *professing* Christians, *with their offspring*, voluntarily associated together for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, and *submitting to a certain form of government.*" p. 107. "Children born within the pale of the *visible church*, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the Church." p. 108 (2, 6). "Not only those who do actually *profess* faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also *the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.*" p. 108 (2, d). "*All baptized persons are members of the church*, are under its care, subject to its government and discipline, and when they have arrived at the years of discretion, *they are bound to perform all the duties of church members.*" p. 497. The same doctrine is declared, p. 671, and the confirmation of it, p. 705. The same again in Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXV, Sec. II, and XXVIII, Sec. IV. Larger Cat. p. 62. Our Church forbids Mr. McCune to administer baptism "*to any that are outside of the visible church,*" and therefore to infants, if he regards them as not members, for "*all baptized persons are members of the Church.*" Larger Cat. Q. 166. Digest, p. 497. Shorter Cat. Q. 95. The visible church she declares *not* to be exclusively an assembly of believers and company of regenerate souls, but an assembly of *baptized professors of the true religion with their unregenerate offspring.* "The purest churches under heaven," she declares, "are subject to both mixture and error, and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan." Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXV, Sec. V. "Ignorant, wicked, and ungodly men," she says, "do receive the outward elements in the sacrament," "are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ," "unworthy of the Lord's table," and are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord to their own damnation." Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXIX, Sec. VIII. Such is our definition of the New Testament Church, corresponding with our Saviour's illustrations in His parables of the tares and the wheat, the sheep and the goats, the good fish and the bad, the wise and the foolish virgins.

Both classes are included and sit under the means of grace, profess Christ, partake of the Lord's table, and meet together at the judgment seat, to be forever separated—some on the right hand, welcomed to life eternal, the rest, on the left, going away into everlasting punishment. Mr. McCune would be wiser than the Master. He says the New Testament Church is an “assembly of *believers*, a company of *regenerate* souls.” His organic union church desires to be an improvement, in this dispensation, on the Master's plan. Peter's sheet, let down from heaven, had in it “all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things.” Mr. McCune's would contain only regenerate doves. Peter's net at Pentecost inclosed Ananias and Sapphira; Mr. McCune's at Mount Lookout would gather only such as Stephen, Paul, and Cornelius.

I dwell upon this specification, because of the fearful latitudinarianism of our times, with a host of lay preachers, who never refer to the covenant of God as the foundation of the visible Church, who regard the individual as its ultimate unit, and not the family, and who judge the title to membership in the church to be exclusively experiences and *evidence*, to fallible judgment, of regeneracy, and with whom, nevertheless, the doctrine of repentance has a small place in their preaching, while the mistake of emotional excitement for a work of grace has a wide berth—all this, with the increasing neglect of infant church-membership, baptism, and family training for God—threatens to sweep us away from our moorings. Organic union principles work in the same direction.

It is not true that the “offspring of believers,” are not members of the visible church, and to be treated as such. They are *born* within the pale of the church. They were never outside of it. The first breath they draw, and the first light they see are covenant breath and light. The arms that press them first to a mother's breast, and the tears that fall upon them, and the soft kiss that blesses their infant cheek, are arms and tears and kiss of covenant love. Their birthright in the church is the result of a promise of grace made to Abraham and his seed. Their

first home on earth is in the church of God. They belong to it as truly as did Isaac in Sarah's arms, or Jacob in Rebecca's. The church covenant is a household covenant. "*I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.*" The promise is made to the children as well as to the parents. "*It is to you and to your children.*" God never made a covenant that did not include the children, all of whom had a right to its sign and seal. The covenant with Adam involved his posterity. The race-covenant with Noah involved the human family, and its radiant seal still spans the heaven in every storm. The Sinai covenant took in the children. The church covenant with Abraham does the same. The unity of Old and New Dispensations is so vital to the doctrine of the Church, and was so well understood, that special precepts under the New, for requiring the signs and seals of the covenant to be given to all included in it, were not required. The covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Isaac, in Jacob, and in Christ, at last, the Promised Seed, in whom all believers and their offspring were represented. "For if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." It is under the general provisions of grace made to Abraham, who is "the father of all them that believe," that believing parents now present their children to God in Baptism upon the sacrifice and service of their faith, taking hold of God's covenant in behalf of their seed, and pleading with Him for the gracious fulfillment of its promises, all which are "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus." It is because the children are included in that household covenant on which the Church of God rests, they are to be baptized. Mr. McCune says, the doctrine of infant church-membership is "no part of the common faith." Astounding declaration, if he knows what the "common faith" means! In the Roman Catholic Church, in the Greek Communion, in all the authoritative creeds of the Protestant Reformation, Lutheran and Reformed, orthodox Puritan and Presbyterian, as in the Apostolic Church, there is no other doctrine. "*Fœderati sunt baptizandi,*" is the consecrated motto, "the federate or covenanted are to be baptized," and only such. Has Mr. McCune yet to

learn, in express language, Paul assures us that baptism takes the place of circumcision, which signified regeneration, or the putting away of the sins of the flesh, the new uncarnal birth, effected by the Holy Ghost, whose work is symbolized by water? Col. ii: 11, 12; Rom. vi: 3, 4. Is he a Master in Israel, and has he yet to learn that, in God's constitution and economy, *all* church-membership rests upon the *prior* fact and condition of covenant relationship, that in the case of infants it is this stipulated inclusion of them in the church covenant, which is a household covenant, that guarantees the right of membership and right of Baptism, its sign and seal; and that in the case of adults, outside of the covenant, their interest herein is to be attained, as Abraham's was, by faith? Has ye yet to learn that it was because all this was so well understood in early times, Lydia and her house, and the jailor and his house, and the household of Stephanus were baptized, the believing parents upon their own faith, the children on the faith of the parents in a covenant confirmed to them and to their seed after them? Or were they the adult domestics and workhands called in from the field, or Roman slaves, who imagined it would be a good thing to be baptized too, because their masters and mistresses commanded it? Is Mr. McCune ignorant of the fact that in the New Testament there is more historic proof of household baptism, than there is of the celebration of the Lord's Supper? Moderator, the reason Mr. McCune assails infant church-membership is because he either assumes that the grace of God does not reach the infant's heart, in infant measure, and abide there as a living seed, or if it did, yet membership shall be denied because of infant incapacity to speak. Sir, the presumption is that grace does come to the children of believing parents, until that presumption is destroyed by evidence of scandal in their lives, and positive refusal to believe in Christ. Our Presbyterian law is built on this, when it requires all the baptized children of believing parents, when they have reached the years of understanding, to come to the Lord's table. The reproach Mr. McCune suggests, of admitting to external membership "a multi-

tude of unbelieving, unconverted children," is a reproach against God's covenant, for they are born "unholy and unclean" yet *federally* "clean." "Else were your children unclean, but now they are holy." The efficacy of divine grace is not tied to sacramental administration in the Presbyterian doctrine of Infant Baptism, and it is a false charge to say that our doctrine involves it. The sacramental union that exists between the sign and the thing signified, is not a realistic but symbolical ordained relation, whereby the sign both represents and seals the grace proposed, upon declared conditions, on the parent's part, without a limitation as to time or ceremony. The Lord's Supper does not cleanse from guilt, but only Christ. Baptism does not purify, or create anew, but only the Holy Spirit. The first may be administered only to believing adults because a Public Object is proposed therein to faith, Christ crucified, whom the believer must know. The second may be administered to unconscious infants, because it represents a Spiritual Agent's power behind the human consciousness, unseen and secret in his work.

I would gladly dwell longer on this, but other subjects demand consideration. I affirm that for a Presbyterian minister to say, or any one to say, "*I utterly repudiate the doctrine of infant church-membership*," is to deny God's covenant in Christ with all believers, and for believers and their seed; to deny the very foundation of the Christian Church itself, and the ground of all church-membership, and prostitute the sacred ordinance of Baptism to a mere profane æsthetic art of fixing to a child a *name*. And yet "ten years" of this we have had, blown in every direction with a flourish of trumpets in the interest of Organic Union! Is it the doctrine of our standards? Is it loyalty to our system of doctrine? It is disloyalty to the sacred truth of Christ and to the Presbyterian Church, a public violation of most solemn ordination vows. Grant this license for "ten years" to all our ministers. Allow the liberalism of the times to rush in like a flood. Proscribe the men who dare to lift their voices against the palliation of ruinous encroachments, and what then? Shall we wonder why a covenant God who

has said "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing *on thine offspring*," has left our fleece dry, and seemed to us as though His promise failed forevermore? Vows have lost their sanctity, and the phantom of organic union, caressed too long, like some Delilah, has grieved away the Spirit of all grace. We have risen up to shake ourselves as at other times, and "wist not that the Lord was departed from us!" I pass to the eighth specification.

SPECIFICATION VIII.

Admission of Unbaptised Persons.

This specification brings to notice a doctrine of Mr. McCune, worthy to stand beside his mutilation of God's covenant with believers in behalf of their offspring. I show you the abstraction of membership from a helpless infant, the dowry God has given it, and charging it unjustly to the credit of a man whom Christ forbids to take it. I show you the tearing of the seal from the official deed conveying to the child its own inheritance, and giving it the seal without the parchment, and then the giving of the parchment to the adult without the seal. Such is the administration and stewardship of the mysteries by organic union, and such is the account kept in its bank. Is it the part of a faithful and wise steward whom his Lord makes ruler over His household to give them their portion in due season? Mr. McCune refuses to children of believers their covenant title to church-membership, and yet *baptizes* them, affixing the sign and seal of their abstracted right. Mr. McCune gives to adults the official deed itself, and covenant inheritance, conveyed to them without the sign and seal of its possession. The testamental seal he gives to one from whom he takes away the testament itself. The testament he passes to the other whom he lets reject the testament seal. Christ has made *baptism* an essential condition of external church-membership, though not an essential condition of membership in the "one Body" of Christ. Mr. McCune will not have it so. Jerusalem below must shine in the

prerogatives of Jerusalem above. The outer palace wall shall be confounded with the Bride herself who sits within the secret chamber. Israel, external, shall have the privileges of Israel, within. The Church invisible and visible shall be melted into one. Mr. McCune declares that the *possession* of saving faith, the door of entrance to the church invisible, shall be the door of entrance to the church visible, and that Christian *Baptism*, on the profession of that faith, shall not. He will admit *unbaptized* possessors of that faith to church membership. Such is Mr. McCune's Organic Union—a bid for Quaker suffrage to his scheme, just as the denial of infant church membership is a bid to Baptists for their suffrage too; just as the denial of organic rule over a plurality of congregations is a bid to Independents for their vote; while the administration of the rite of baptism to infants is a sop to Presbyterians, the Prelatic posture of a minister without an Eldership a crumb to all Episcopalians, and creeds, condemned to dungeons and to chains, a sound of liberty to all Disciples! Moderator, what kind of a thing is baptism upon Mr. McCune's theory? Our book tells us that it is a covenant ordinance, a sign and seal of covenant blessing. With Mr. McCune it is neither. Having destroyed the covenant relation, baptism becomes nothing more than if one man should throw water into the face of another, and profanely pronounce upon him the name of the Trinity. With us baptism is an "*ordinance*," with him it is a handful of water. And must we spend our time here, in judicial process and trouble for a year, before such nonsense and such disloyalty to our confession and our vows can be arrested, and our Church's peace secured?

Mr. McCune is bold to tell us what he would do, and what he *has* done in this respect. He would, he says, "receive any one" whom he judges to be regenerate, "although" such one has the views of the "Friends" concerning water baptism. Let the Presbytery observe, not only every member of the societies commonly called Quakers, who he judges "make a credible profession," and therefore, as he concludes, are regenerate, but "any one" though not among "Friends," yet having their "same

views," as to water baptism, he will receive. In other words, all credible professors who; *ipso facto*, are decided to be credible possessors of saving faith, and yet "*who at the same time deny the perpetual obligation of water baptism,*" he would "receive." He breaks down the door of entrance into the visible church, already made by Christ, and makes another for himself. And then he pretends, while pleading his broad principle, that it is only an "*exceptional case.*" Christ's command is absolute. Our Standards bind it on the conscience of Mr. McCune. If one may enter unbaptized, ten thousand may. No "*exceptional case*" is allowed by Christ. None by our Standards. When writing his book on Organic Union, and trying to establish the proposition that none may be excommunicated, except upon the previous judgment that they are unregenerate, he lays down the doctrine that if a man refuses to obey the words of Christ, he is not a Christian. He asks, "Can a man *refuse to obey* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and *still be a Christian?*" The judgment of charity would lead us to say, "Yes," for Mr. McCune's sake, when we remember that he is under orders from Christ himself to baptize all nations. He asks again, "Can a man *refuse to obey* the inspired apostles and be a Christian?" The same judgment of charity inclines us to answer "Yes," for the sake of Mr. McCune's "Friends," for the Apostles "commanded" believers to "be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts 10: 48. Organic Union, pp. 77, 78. Many a "proud" and many an "ignorant" man is a Christian, and can say and do many bad things. Mr. McCune, defending his new "divine law" as to excommunication, not only refuses to admit to membership, but excludes from membership, as unregenerate, the man who refuses to obey a known "command" of Christ and His Apostles. But when expounding his new "divine law" again, he assures us, "*unhesitatingly,*" that he will judge to be *regenerate*, and receive to membership "every" man, "any" man, *anywhere*, who refuses to obey what Mr. McCune himself acknowledges to be a perpetual command of Christ and His Apostles, and be baptized. On his own confession,

therefore, his net takes in a whole swarm of unregenerate souls, believing unbelievers, who not only repudiate Baptism, but both the sacraments together, and makes mere membership "all the fellowship they will accept." How then, on his own showing, is the Christian Church a "company of regenerate souls?" By his own definition every unbaptized man is unregenerate, because he disobeys a divine command in refusing to be baptized. Mr. McCune's "Friends" have no occasion to thank him for his argument. He makes them uncovered. The "*Quaker gun*" may be heard resounding, "Friend, if what thee sayest is true, we don't need thee; if what thee sayest is false, we don't want thee!" And the Baptist gun may yet explode a flood that will immerse a creed that can't hold water even for sprinkling, and leave not one of all the new communion unbaptized. It avails nothing for Mr. McCune to say, many interpret the command spiritually. "No human deductions!" We want the command "*expressed in God's own language.*" "*The Bible is the only true creed for all true Christians, and all ministers, and all churches.*" "*Every thing human in creeds I oppose.*" With what consistency can Mr. McCune ejaculate such sentiments, and then propose his own "deduction" in face of an express command of Christ and His apostles?—a deduction denying the perpetual and necessary obligation of water-baptism, as a door of entrance to the visible Church?—and then, like Sir Oracle, thunder in our ears, "We *maintain* that faith in Christ is not merely the great condition, but the *only* condition." "When we say that faith in Christ is the *one* essential condition of entrance, we mean that it is the *only* condition." And so the Organic Union "creed—no creed," woven like Joseph's coat of many colors, goes on, and the piebald anti-pro-denomination pleads an "Apostolic pedigree! Pray, moderator, what Apostle was it who fathered such a creed? I am sure it was not Peter who said, "Repent and be baptized." I am sure it was not Paul who tells us, "We are buried with Christ, by Baptism, into His Death!" "If I seek to please *men*, then I am not the servant of Christ." Christ's command is supreme though a thou-

sand Presbyteries or Synods are willing parties to its transgression. Broad and bold is the utterance of the Presbyterian Church that her whole power in Christ's Kingdom is simply "declarative and ministerial," and she dare no more dispense with Christ's command than Gabriel dare dispute an order from the Throne. By what authority does Mr. McCune leave it for the applicant to decide what the commands of Christ are, what His sacraments are, and how these are to be observed? Such an argument is a destruction of the authority of the Church as a teacher and witness of the Truth, and abdication of the functions of the ministry. If one applicant may decide according to his notion, another may decide a different way, and every command of Christ be trampled under foot. The Standards, moderator, which Mr. McCune has vowed that he sincerely adopts, approves, and will maintain, declare and teach in the most express language the perpetual and necessary obligation of water-baptism. The ordinance is "to be continued in the Church till the end of the world." Conf. of Faith, chap. xxviii, sec. 1; "continued in the Church of Christ until His second coming." Larger Cat. Q. 176. "To neglect or contemn this ordinance is a *great sin*." Conf. of Faith, chap. xxviii, sec. v. It is to despise Christ's command. "Can the Church answer to her great Head, if this neglect of duty be not mourned over and corrected?" Digest, p. 673. This ordinance is, for uncovenanted adults, the door of entrance into the visible Church, the gate "whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church." Larger Cat. Q. 165. Here "*Lo Ammi*" and "*Lo Ruhamah*" enter—Hosea i: 9, 10. It is part and parcel of a credible profession of faith in Christ. "When *unbaptized* persons apply for admission into the Church," after satisfactory examination, and, in ordinary cases, making a public profession, "they shall, *thereupon*, be baptized." Digest, p. 677, (iv). "In the practice of our Church, and according to her Standards, baptism is manifestly regarded *as a part* of the general profession of faith *and obedience* to Christ." Digest, p. 678. By no vote of any session, nor of any committee-men, nor of any court on earth can an *unbaptized* person be

allowed membership in the Church. Mr. McCune is taught, by our Standards, "that the administration of baptism, according to the Word of God, *must be involved in and attendant upon*" any vote of reception. p. 129 (4). Expressly is it stated, "The vote of a session does not entitle any *unbaptized* person to the privileges of the Church, for the reason that baptism, as our Confession of Faith declares, (Chap. xxviii, sec. 1), is declared to be a sacrament *for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church.*" p. 130. "The *public profession* of one's faith may be omitted," but baptism may not be omitted, for the "exceptional case" as it is called, has no respect whatever to the omission of *baptism*, but only to the omission of a *public profession*, when, for good reasons, it can not be made. So our Standards: "The public profession of one's faith may, for sufficient reasons, as our Directory of Worship allows, be omitted; but the *exceptional case* does not respect *baptism*, which precedes the admission of the party to the Lord's table." p. 130. The vote of the session or of any court admitting persons to church-membership, "must be *conditioned upon baptism*, and can, in no case, be a substitute for the sacrament itself (baptism). p. 130. Twenty years ago, long before Mr. McCune came into the Presbyterian Church where he now is, the General Assembly settled that question. It settled also the question as to the admission of the "Friends" by referring to the answers of the Larger Catechism, Q. 166, and Shorter Catechism, Q. 95, the undeniable doctrine of which is that they are not to be admitted into the Presbyterian Body while holding their peculiar views. Is Mr. McCune so blind, are *we* so blind, as not to see that to tolerate the omission of either sacrament, is to deny the perpetual and necessary obligation of both, and unchurch the Church? Is any thing plainer in the world than that Mr. McCune's profession of obedience to Christ, as a minister of the New Testament, is a disobedience even greater than to the solemn vows he has taken to support the Standards of the Presbyterian Church? or are Mr. McCune's views, the views of the Friends? Has he yet to learn that although some scruples, by applicants,

in reference to infant baptism may be tolerated, in hope that sound instruction in the word, and loving reverence for Christ's command, and God's covenant, will remove them, yet *no* scruples as to their *own* baptism, upon profession of their faith, are or can be tolerated for a single moment? The Church is under law to Christ, and every applicant must come under law to the Church. He must "submit" to be bound by the Church on earth, binding by the Word of Christ alone, as she hopes to have her administrative acts bound in heaven. There must be submission to Christ's laws. Digest, pp. 675, 676 (7), 107, (ii, iv).

Moderator and brethren, all this Mr. McCune knows. He is not ignorant of the Standards. It is by no fault of logic he has been betrayed into his chosen position. The logic is bad enough, but the "I propose" is worse. His Organic Union Rosinante rides rough-shod over the Standards, and delights to prance and caper under the spurs of her Don, upon those very spots where the truth especially comes into contact with his scheme. He dismounts and lays his Organic Union ax not "at," but "to" the root of the Presbyterian tree; the tree of the visible Church; the tree of the covenant of God; the tree of Church Confessions; the tree of Baptism; the tree of Church polity, and leaves nothing unchopped. His motto would seem to be, "*After me the Deluge;*" or "*After me the Millennium!*" He strikes down the whole distinctive system of Presbyterian doctrine and order. If an unbaptized person may be a member, he may be an officer; if an officer, he may be a minister. If the title of elders may be thrown away, the title of ministers may be also. If he may dispense with ordination by the laying on of hands in the one case, he may do so in the other. There is nothing in the principles of his creed-no-creed to prevent an unordained, unbaptized ministry, called "leaders of the meeting," preaching to a church of unbaptized professing Christians who, having voted to dispense with the observance of one sacrament, are ready at the next meeting to dispense with the observance of the other. Under Mr. McCune's polity, which makes or unmakes anything by a vote of a mongrel congregation, under no constitution, he

may do anything he pleases and plead immunity on the ground that he is "outside Presbyterian jurisdiction." The organization, as such, that would be left, acting on the principles of the new "divine law," would not be worth the while for Satan to tempt or Christ to save. If he may dispense with the Sacraments, he may dispense with the Word; if he may dispense with the Word, he may dispense with the Master. Moderator, such Organic Union, under the guise of Christianity, is verily a "great sin" against Christ, His Cross, and His Crown! "Ten years?" Tell it not in Gath! I pass to the ninth specification.

SPECIFICATION IX.

Saving Faith—What is it?

This specification, and the proofs under it, show what Mr. McCune thinks of Saving Faith, the one condition of external Church-membership. It also measures the liberality of judgment allowable in the ministerial determination of what constitutes credible *evidence* of regeneracy in a suppliant for Church ordinances and privileges. As a result of the *minimum quid* creed, we have the *minimum quid* faith, and the *maximum quid* liberality upon qualifications for Church-membership. Briefly, while it is vastly important that all Christians should believe in the infallibility of the Word of God, upon the unfailing certainty of whose promises in and testimony concerning Christ all salvation hangs, and the whole assurance, comfort, peace, light, hope, and life of a believing soul, yet such a faith as this is not *essential* to being a Christian, and if so then clearly not essential to salvation. The conviction or inner-conscious belief that the Bible can not fail, is not even essential to true and saving faith itself. To say that a part may be infallible, and a part not, is no help here. It is enough that "the Bible is my creed," without believing it infallible. "We believe," says Mr. McCune, "that a man may be a Christian and *not believe in the infallibility of the Bible*, although 'almost' all Christians do believe the Bible to be infallible." So, again, while it is vastly important that the testimony as

to Christ's proper humanity should itself be true, and all Christians believe it, yet such a faith is not essential to being a Christian, and, by consequence, not essential to salvation. The attempt to find a shelter for these views by a reference to Luther, as the defendant has already intimated, and to plead the name of Dr. Hodge, in addition, is vain. The shelter of ubiquitarianism, and the criticism of Luther on some parts of the Canon, will not help the defendant to maintain statements so broad and flat-footed as these. It is an after-thought. Did Luther deny the infallibility of the Bible? Did he deny the proper humanity of Christ? The conviction or inner-conscious belief that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, the Son of Adam, the Son of God, was, and is, my true Elder Brother, whose soul and body were a sacrifice to God for human guilt, is not essential to true and saving faith itself, according to Mr. McCune. It is enough that "Jesus is my Saviour," as "the Bible is my creed," without believing in His proper humanity. "We believe," says Mr. McCune, "that a man may be a Christian and *not believe in the proper humanity of Christ.*" Such is the essential nature of Organic Union Saving Faith. It is the acceptance of a testimony concerning whose certainty the soul remains in doubt. It is the repose of the soul upon the word of One who claims to be the sinner's substitute, but whose proper humanity the Christian calls in question. It opens the door for the old exploded Christological heresies. The Bible *may* be infallible, but the Christian need not be sure that it is so. Christ *may* be properly human, but the Christian need not be sure that He is so. The anguish of the loving heart, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him," can never pierce a soul to whose Saving Faith no certainty that He is properly man, nor that His word of grace can ever fail, are needed. The miraculous office of this Organic Union Saving Faith is (1) that, *ipso facto*, it excludes all fatal heresy, and (2) it makes regenerate souls all orthodox; the one a negative pole of virtue, the other a positive. "A Saving

Faith in Christ," says Mr. McCune, "excludes all fatal heresies." Again, "Regenerate souls are all orthodox."

I beg of my brethren in the ministry to note to what direful lengths one false principle lodged in the human mind will lead, one false interpretation of God's word! To observe how a man devoted to it is borne, he knows not whither, and stands "amazed," abashed, confounded, when confronted with his own daungerreotype. To Mr McCune's new non-excluding "divine law of organization," which puts *Union before Truth*, and not *Truth before Union*; *Indifference before Conscience*, and not *Conscience before Indifference*, is all this dark perversion to be traced. Organic Union calls for sacrifice, the sacrifice of Truth, her abdication of her throne. The sacrifice is made, and Toleration is the cry. The necessary articles of the Christian Faith are reduced to the smallest possible compass, in order to include the utmost possible number. The interpretation of the Scripture is put in abeyance only to make room for the encroachments of Infidelity. The doctrinal results of eighteen centuries, embodied in our peerless Standards, the martyr-testimony, crown, and heir-loom of our noble Church, with all its barriers, guards, and chosen words, bright like glittering armory, and all their histories, recounting where and how the Truth was saved on many a hard-fought battle-field, all are thrown away. And what is given us here instead? The doctrines of Rome, against which the Reformers fought, and over which they triumphed. *Uncertainty as to God's word! Uncertainty of the believer's salvation!* Room for Tradition to come in here! Room for salvation by works here! Room for the calm scornful smile of the Archbishop of Cincinnati! Room for the mantling cheek of shame in the Presbyterian Church! The Standards a shuttlecock, within five years after Reunion, struck by the battledore of Romanism to the one side, struck back by the battledore of Independency to the other; both in the hands of Mr. McCune. Or is it the spirit of Modern Liberalism, the Sceptical free-thinking "Spirit of the Age," breathing through Organic Union, the Serpent, in the garb of light, lurking in our Eden, and whispering doubt as to

God's truth, saying : " *Yea, hath God said ?*" and doubt as to Christ's proper humanity, saying : " Has He come in the flesh ?"

" Ithuriel and Zephon ! with winged speed,
Search through this garden ; leave unsearched no nook ;
There tells of some infernal Spirit seen,
Hitherward bent (who could have thought ?), escaped
The bars of hell, on errand bad, no doubt ;
Such, when ye find, seize fast, and hither bring."

Moderator, the Presbyterian Standards, Mr. McCune has vowed to maintain, teach that no man can be a "Christian," and "*not believe in the infallibility of the Bible ;*" that no man can be a "Christian," and *not believe in the proper humanity of Christ*, and that saving faith carries in its bosom, by necessity, the assurance that the Word of God is infallible, and that Christ is properly man. Our Confession of Faith, chap. XIV, secs. 1, 2, declares that Saving Faith is a "grace," "the work of the Spirit of Christ in the heart," and that "by this faith a Christian believeth to be true, whatever is revealed in the word, *for the authority of God Himself speaking therein.*" "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar." It teaches, chap. I, sec. 5, that this faith is "our full persuasion and assurance of *the infallible truth* and Divine authority thereof," and that this persuasion and assurance are "*from the inward work of the Holy Spirit*, bearing witness with and by the Word in our hearts." This is what the Holy Ghost does when He makes a "Christian." He enlightens the soul to know that the Bible is infallibly true. The believer learns that the "Supreme Judge" in all doubt, is "the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." It is not possible for a man to be a "Christian," such an one as the Holy Ghost makes, and not believe in the infallibility of the Bible. It is not possible for him to have Saving Faith and doubt the Word of God. The ground for his confidence is gone. To doubt its infallibility is to doubt its *Inspiration*, for it is the Inspiration that makes it *Infallible*. Faith is reduced to mere opinion or conjecture, which is not saving. The only possible argument by which to avoid the force of these conclusions, is to affirm that the "Bible" is *not* the "Word of God," and

that the "Word of God" is *not* the "Bible." Moderator, our Standards have settled this matter for all Presbyterian ministers, and no one in our Church has a right to teach any such doctrine. Our standards expressly declare that the Bible is all the Books of the Old and New Testaments, and enumerates them in order. Our Confession says, "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the *Word of God* written, are now contained all the Books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these," and every Presbyterian minister solemnly affirms that he receives them as the "Word of God," and the "only *infallible* rule of faith and practice." The "Bible" is the "*Word of God*," and the "*Word of God*" is "the Bible," all whose books our Standards affirm are "given by inspiration of God." And so as to our Lord's proper humanity. Our Shorter Catechism tells us that Saving Faith "is a Saving Grace whereby we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation, *as He is offered to us in the gospel.*" Q. 86. And how He is offered to us in the gospel we are told in these words, "Christ, the Son of God, became *man*, by taking to Himself a *true body* and a *reasonable soul.*" Q. 22. Also Large Cat. Q's. 36, 37, 39, where His humanity is declared to be a *necessity* for our salvation. The object of Saving Faith is not a phantom, not a picture in the mind, not an ideal Jesus, not a work of imagination, but the *Son of God in flesh*; *i. e.*, human nature, "*proper humanity*," a "*man*," who is also God. Deity, apart from humanity, is no object of Saving Faith. Humanity, apart from Deity, is none. Saving Faith must believe in both, or it can not be saving, because it does not receive Christ "*as He is offered to us in the gospel.*" It is the mark of ancient as of modern Anti-Christianity, to deny that "Christ has come in the flesh." It is next door to it to "not believe" that He has so come, and not far from it to question His proper humanity. It is not possible for the Holy Spirit to work in a sinner's soul Saving Faith in Christ, and allow him "not to believe in the proper humanity of Christ." Without that humanity there is no sacrifice, no atonement, no death, no resurrection, no ascension. To not believe in the infallibility of the Bible, is to not believe in its inspi-

ration. To not believe in the proper humanity of Christ is to not believe in his true Incarnation. When Inspiration and Incarnation are thrown into doubt, where is the saving faith? If a Christian need not believe that Christ was properly man, he need not believe that He died on the cross or rose from the dead. The organic-union-liberal-possible Christian is simply an infidel. And yet Mr. McCune would receive him, and informs us that such saving faith as leaves the Word of God, and the work of Christ in doubt, *ipso facto*, "excludes all fatal heresies" (!), and that the possession of such faith is "credible evidence" of regeneration (!!), and that "regenerate souls are all orthodox" (!!!) What fatal heresy does it not include? It is fatal heresy itself. Who are the "regenerate?" They are unbelievers. Who are the "orthodox?" The doubters of God's Word and Christ's proper humanity. All this Mr. McCune will tolerate in others, even though he may try to explain it away for himself. Is this the justifying faith of the gospel, defined from its source, the Spirit; from its seat, the heart; from its food, the Word; from its object, Christ; and from its end, salvation? Sir, it is just like the loyalty, in face of the doctrine of our Standards which teaches that the number of the elect is "so certain and definite that it can not be increased or diminished," the loyalty that teaches in Mr. McCune's language, there are "multitudes in the pit of despair who might have been blessedly and eternally saved" if only organic union had existed from the beginning. Christian Standard, July 31, 1875, p. 245. Is this the orthodoxy of our Standards? Is it loyalty to the Presbyterian Church? "Ten years." Publish it not in Askelon! I pass to the tenth specification.

SPECIFICATION X.

Time of Advocating His Views.

This specification, with its appended proofs, establishes the fact beyond question of the sincerity of Mr. McCune in the advocacy of his peculiar views. They are his abiding convictions, formed after mature deliberation, and during

protracted and various discussion, and nourished with assiduous care. They are no transient misjudgments, slips of the pen, unreiterated statements, words hastily spoken, or positions thoughtlessly taken. The Prosecution could have overburdened the Court with a still more redundant testimony. They are the result of a consistent scheme, built on the boundless license of the new "divine law of organization," a scheme revolutionary of all existing denominations but its own. "Ten years" have testified to its propagation, within the bounds of this Presbytery, in every way possible for a propagation to be made. The time, therefore, as the manner of this advocacy, is a demonstration of Mr. McCune's sincerity herein. "Ten years" of unchallenged liberty, he numbers, as if establishing his right to continue the advocacy as long as he chooses. He pleads five of these ten, the period since the official order of the Synod of Cincinnati to circulate his views of organic union, as a special period of encouragement, enough to justify a double protest against the Presbytery's right to bring both them and himself under formal adjudication. "I am," says he, "advocating no sentiments now (Feb. 15, 1876), which I have not *openly proclaimed for ten years back*." It is the truth. He affirms that the liberty he has enjoyed in the Presbytery for all these years remained officially "unquestioned until Dr. Skinner made," what he calls "his attack upon him;" *i. e.* until the time of the Council that installed him at Mt. Lookout, Dec. 1875. His convictions are sincere, if *time* is an evidence of sincerity. He proposes still to advocate them. "I have publicly advocated," says he to the Committee, "and propose to advocate the following principles on the subject of Christian Union, etc," principles declaring all denominational enactments, and distinctive creed statements, as "wedges of division," "apples of discord," "Achan in the camp," and their enforcement as "essentially sinful." Thus, for "many years," last past, as propagandist and Apostle of Organic Union on such a Basis, he has diffused his teachings throughout the Christian community, as editor in his paper, as minister in his pulpit, as debater in the press, as lecturer

in the country, in all possible ways, invoking the cry of "Sectarianism," "Bigotry," "Popery," against those who have dared to oppose him. Under the claim of "Conscience," "Toleration," and "Liberty," he has espoused and crusaded a doctrinal communism, and an ecclesiastical phalanstery, of which Brown, Fourier, St. Simon, and Robert Dale Owen might be proud.

It is a fair question, Moderator and brethren, how much time a teacher of error may be allowed in the Presbyterian Church for the advocacy of views destructive of her Constitution and her very existence? If Mr. McCune may be allowed "ten years," the rest of us may be allowed the same. Paul, at Antioch, yielded, "no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might remain." Evidently he did not favor any Organic Union scheme the Judaizers proposed, or Peter compromisingly winked at for the time. A "Plan of Union," enacted in 1801, endured a generation, and was brought to its close by legislative enactment in 1838, in order to save the Standards. For several years past, more than a hundred Presbyterian ministers allow their names to be appended, in a religious paper, published at Brooklyn, and devoted to Organic Church Union, to a "brief creed," which Unitarians, or Semi-Pelagians, or Arminians, or Prelatists, or Independents, could readily subscribe. "Ten years" may make a revelation. "*Verecor quorsum evadat!*" Thirty-eight years ago was the following utterance made: "We have in our Church many men who are avowed *anti-sectarians*, who think the barriers which separate the different denominations of Christians should be broken down. It is a possible case that men of these opinions should have, on some occasion, an accidental majority in the General Assembly. Suppose they should avail themselves of the opportunity to enact a plan of Union, by which, not the favored Congregationalist only, but the Episcopalian, the Baptist, and even the Papist, should be allowed to sit and vote in all our Presbyteries. This would be hailed with delight by many as the commencement of a new era, as the adoption of a principle which could stand the test of the millenium." Princeton Essays (Second Series), p. 281. It

is possible that in "ten years" from now something of this nature might be attempted. It was not possible for thirty years past, in either branch of our Church. But as things now go with so many, and "*Union*" is put before "*Truth*," and things allowed in the Reunion that never would have been tolerated in either branch during a generation past, it is fair to ask, how long, *now*, may a man be permitted to propagate views and principles, which not only strike at our standards of doctrine and order, but also at the very truth of God itself, and at the very existence of the Presbyterian Church? The ancient watchword of historic Presbyterianism was "*Truth before Union*." The Reformers valued it more than all else. They abandoned the boasted Organic Union of Rome, in order to save the Organic Truth of God. "The Paulickian line of witnesses took "*Heavenly Truth*" for their motto. The Waldensian line held aloft in the Alps and in the valleys of Piedmont their Valdic "*Lucerna*," a lighted candlestick amid surrounding darkness, inscribed with the words "*Lux lucet in Tenebris*"—"the light shineth in the darkness," although the fields were as green, and the sky as blue, and the sun as bright as they are now. They put "*Truth before Union*." Calvin's motto was Paul's, "*Let God be true and every man a liar*." "We can do nothing against the Truth," not even Organic Union. But now the times are changed, and we with them. "*Ten years*" to ply the misinterpretation of Rom. 15: 7. "*Ten years*" to teach that our Lord's intercessory prayer necessitates the breaking up of all the evangelical denominations as such, and the non-enforcement of the denominational laws of the Presbyterian Church. "*Ten years*" for a Presbyterian minister to exclaim against Church creeds and confessions, and denounce his own, among the rest, as "sectarian." "*Ten years*" to harp on the word "*Evangelical*," as though it were a word, not of shades and degrees, but of absoluteness in its application. "*Ten years*" to mutilate and deny God's covenant in Christ, with believers, in behalf of their children, and take away the covenant foundation of the Church itself. "*Ten years*" to advocate doctrines and views antagonistic to the very essence of our

Eldership polity. “*Ten years*” to preach that the visible Church is the “Body of Christ,” and break down the apostolic distinction Rome destroyed, and the Reformers reclaimed, as they searched for the Truth. “*Ten years*” to deny infant church-membership, advocate the admission of unbaptized professors to full communion, and permission to dispense with the sacraments of the Church. “*Ten years*” to proclaim the right of a Presbyterian minister to be under two different creeds and antagonizing allegiances at the same time, and church members under two conflicting jurisdictions. “*Ten years*” to herald non-excluding terms of ministerial fellowship. “*Ten years*” to maintain that ordination vows do not bind, or bind only to what each minister chooses to teach. “*Ten years*” to assert that the Presbyterian law is an oppression of the conscience, and that the time has come to wake up and begin a reorganization of the whole New Testament Church! “*Ten years*” of set purpose and assiduous labor to “imbrue the whole denomination” with these organic union principles; and now the word that “eight or ten years ago” it might have done to raise the point whether such liberty and such advocacy might be questioned, “*but now it is too late!*” There is some force in this. How long may a Presbyterian minister go on in this way, and how long “propose” still to go on?

Moderator and Brethren, I present it as a case of unparalleled license and persistence, on the part of any minister, in the history of the Presbyterian, or any other denomination, whose respect for its own honor, and the honor of religion and truth has not yet departed, and on whose ecclesiastical walls “*Ichabod*” has not yet been written. And I present the additional aggravation of an utter disregard of the conscientious feelings of his brethren in the ministry, and of the respect due to this Court, and of the peace of the Church, as also a disregard of the proprieties and duties incumbent upon him in the circumstances,—a disregard no less manifest than that displayed toward the Standards and the Presbyterian Church itself,—persisting with more than indifference to the action of the Presbytery in the public propagation of his views, without restraint, even

after his course had been brought to official notice, and his case put under official examination.

It was on April 13, 1876, the Presbytery's resolution of inquiry was passed. Respect for that action should have prompted Mr. McCune to abstain from the further propagation of his views until an official judgment had been reached by his brethren. Instead of this, we find him, May 8, 1876, only a little over three weeks after the Presbytery's action, publicly advocating again his views on Denominations, the Church of God, Infant Baptism, Terms of Communion, Admission of the Unbaptized, his whole scheme, precisely as before, in presence of the General Ministerial Association of Cincinnati. This was contempt, if not contumacy. Again, his views are spread abroad in the public press, May 9, 1876. Not less confident does he appear June 26, 1876, in presence of the Presbytery's Investigating Committee, to whom he offers a paper, given back, however, to be substituted by one less convicting, but still replaced by another, informing the committee that he "proposes" to keep on just as before, and declaring that "it is susceptible of proof that the advocacy of this Christian union doctrine has been with the knowledge and by the permission of the Presbytery of Cincinnati and by the consent and with the co-operation of the Synod of Cincinnati, and that this advocacy is not in violation of any Presbyterian law whatever." Nor less marked was the public disrespect to the Presbytery and his brethren, by again the third time reiterating his views to the public in a formal protest against the action of the Presbytery, published October 17, 1876, in the Commercial, replete with such gross personalities, as would bar it from a place on the official records, yet published to the world before presentation of it to this body. I present it, Moderator, as unexampled in the history of our Church. May it please the Court, that "ten years" of such advocacy be the extreme limit of the indulgence!

The Presbyterian Church, stirred by Common Fame, and grieved at such persistence, comes into Court with a righteous plaint in her mouth, making solemn averment that

she receives but damage and demoralization, by such liberty, assumed either by ministers or elders. She pleads that she can not build while buffeted by her own sons, or maintain either her prestige or honor, while her name is denied, her distinctive enactments and organic law traduced, and her authority treated with contempt; and that the doctrines, principles, and views of Mr. McCune, like the manner of their advocacy, are not only at war with her standards, but, if generally accepted, would be subversive of her constitution and of her very existence as a distinctive denomination.

The prosecution does not dwell upon the law, but simply refers to it. Not one hour is allowed for such a license, not one moment, by our statute. It is disloyalty. Our Church requires her ministry "to teach and preach according to the form of sound words in the Confession and Catechisms, and *avoid and oppose all errors contrary thereto.*" Digest, p. 48 (II). To "traduce" her Standards is a call for "that salutary discipline which hath for its object the maintenance of the peace and purity of the Church under the government of her Great Master." p. 43 (3). They who can not accept her denominational laws are invited to "peaceably withdraw." p. 48 (I). Strong is the injunction of our Supreme Court, signed by the Moderator, the mentor of his day: "Let no doctrine inconsistent with the Sacred Scriptures, *as explained and summarily taught in the doctrinal Standards of our Church*, be promulgated or favored in any of our Churches" "He who teaches any doctrine, palpably and plainly inconsistent with the evident meaning of our excellent formularies, should be regarded as an *errorist* by Presbyterians, whom they ought not to encourage, but *discountenance, reject, and avoid.*" p. 304 (8). This is our law. It remains to be seen whether our "Reunion" will respect it. I pass to the eleventh specification.

SPECIFICATION XI.

Common Fame.

This specification, with its proofs, establishes the fact of the Common Fame of Mr. McCune's disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church, loudly proclaiming that, in contravention of his vows, he was the public advocate of principles and views at war with our standards, and subversive, if generally accepted, of our Doctrines, Constitution, and very existence; a fame accompanied not only with strong presumption of its truth, but living demonstration, as already shown, during a period of "ten years;" an offense striking at vital truths of Divine Revelation, and the very foundations of the Presbyterian Church, and calling for action by this Court. The Court will note that of the many articles in the *thirteen* different secular and religious papers enumerated in Proof 1, under this Specification, some *forty* or more of which are editorial, most of them condemning in the strongest possible manner Mr. McCune's views, and some of them his course, not *one* was published *subsequent* to April 13, 1876, the date of the Presbytery's resolution at Glendale, when the views and course of Mr. McCune were, for the first time, formally brought to the notice of the Presbytery, and the following Preamble and Resolution were passed: "Whereas, for *some time past*, there have been *current rumors* in regard to the views and course of Rev. W. C. McCune, a member of this Presbytery, involving the question of his *loyalty* to the order of the Presbyterian Church, and whereas there seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to the subject,

"Therefore, resolved, that a Committee of three ministers and two elders be appointed to have a full conference with Mr. McCune, and to inquire into all the facts bearing on the case, and report to Presbytery at the next stated meeting." The Common Fame as to the charge was not only co-extensive with the jurisdiction of both the Presbytery and the Synod, not merely co-extensive with the bounds of neighboring Synods, but with those of the

Presbyterian Church itself, North and South, East and West, long before the Presbytery met April 13, 1876. The Court will also notice that all this superabundant evidence of Common Fame is only adduced by the prosecution as *additional or supplementary* to what is already manifest from the dates in the proofs already given. It is added to show the ample ground for action by the Presbytery. The Presbyterian Church, therefore, conducts her process properly on the ground of Common Fame, and this Court is abundantly justified in ordering up the prosecution for this reason. It will also be noted, by a comparison of dates, that the resolution of the Glendale Presbytery, April 13, 1876, was not taken until *five months* after the claimed and reputed organization of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, November, 1875. That part of the Investigating Committee's Report, which episcopally condemns the views of Mr. McCune, is quoted in Proof 3 of the specification, in order to show that the presumption of the truth of Common Fame was a true presumption, even apart from the documentary evidence spread broadcast in the editorial columns and public discussions antecedent to April 13, 1876. On that portion of the evidence the prosecution make no comment. Our Church recognizes that Common Fame may be common falsehood, and is ready to mete to it the condemnation it deserves. But that any Presbyterian minister should pursue such a course as, by his own acts, to intensify the truth of Common Fame, charging him with disloyalty to the Faith and Order of his Church, such that the scandal can not be removed without the action of the Court, and for the honor of religion, our Book accounts a "sin." Digest, pp. 521 (V.VI), 499 (IV.V).

Offense: Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church.

CHARGE II.

The character of this Charge is that the Rev. W. C. McCune, for the avowed purpose of carrying into practical effect the doctrines, views, and principles specified under Charge I, bent his energies to the work of advising, promoting, and encouraging the New Anti-Denominational Association, called distinctively the "*Union Christian Churches of America*," and also the Anti-Denominational Organization at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, both these organizations being founded on the doctrines, principles, and views aforesaid. The gravamen of this charge is the same as that of Charge I, viz., that such course of conduct, if generally allowed, would totally subvert our Constitution and destroy the Presbyterian Denomination.

SPECIFICATION I.

General Association.

The first Specification calls attention to the means Mr. McCune has employed in this work. The Prosecution note that, immediately after the New York Convention, October 1873, met to "make immediate and prayerful preparation for the reorganization" of the whole "Christian Church," the "*Christian Unity*" appeared in Cincinnati, under the sole editorship of Mr. McCune, its first number bearing date Cincinnati, November 8, 1873. That number is herewith presented. Then began the work in earnest. "Life is short, and time is fleeting." The editor tells us "when he began the 8th of November to issue this paper, he, at the same time, began to deliver lectures on the subject of Christian Unity." His "most efficient instrumentalities" were "public oral addresses and the press." The tone of the editorials and addresses, together, reveal the fact that he was hopeful, and not in the least appalled by the magnitude of the undertaking. He saw "*a great host of living Christian hearts, now separated by mere human sectarian*

walls," who, "but for sectarian managers and place-men, would gladly unite to-morrow in the new movement!" With the zeal of an Apostle he addresses himself to the work. John in the desert crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," was not more in earnest. Proof 2, under the Specification, shows us Mr. McCune in the field; how by lecturing at large, traversing the bounds of the Synod, and outside of it, he discoursed on Organic Union at Butler, Boston, and Newport in Kentucky; in Goshen, South Salem, and at Parrott's School House, in Ohio; how Linden and Springfield, Urbana and Buck Creek, New Richmond and Hillsboro, woke their echoes to his voice; how Madison and Middleton hearkened attentive on Sabbath morning to the new "divine law of organization," and the afternoon bore the accents to Astoria, while the shades of evening that fell around Jacksonburg were illumined with the shimmering light of the advancing millennium! "Eighteen" different places within one month, between November 8 and December 13, all led listening to the music of Organic Union, as when Orpheus charmed the woods with his lyre—a zeal Apostolic, worthy of Loyola and St. Xavier! And so the work went on. Next comes the wide sweeping — "*Address to all the Christian Ministers and Churches in North America, with a Basis of Union*," issued from Cincinnati, October 1874, the topmost signature to which is that of Mr. McCune, calling on all sympathizing ministers and members, everywhere, to range themselves under the banner of the new Anti-Denominational Association, to be known as the "*Union Christian Churches of America*," adopting the Basis and enrolling their names; how, in order to avoid the charge of forming a "new sect," they were to hold on and let go at the same time, if they "*do not deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations*;" to remain as ministers and members in the old "extra-scriptural" organization and yet enter the new one "on a New Testament Basis," after the true Apostolic style; that ministers will be asked no questions except whether they agree to a few unexplained texts, "expressed in God's own language as commonly received," and which they are told constitute the

“common faith,” “once for all delivered to the saints;” to be sure and send “*delegates*” to attend the impending General Convention at Suffolk, Virginia, on the first Wednesday of May, 1875, and, in particular, to advocate the principles of Organic Union as set forth in the Basis. (See Specification V, Proofs 2, 3, 6). What fortunes attended the call we know not. The Convention at Suffolk was held.

Temporarily suspended, the “*Christian Unity*” is again resumed, not upon the principle of non-enforcement, but upon the principle of re-inforcement, the paper appearing August 1, 1875, under the joint triple editorship of the Rev. W. B. Wellons, D.D., Thomas J. Melish, and W. C. McCune, issued both at Cincinnati, Ohio, and Suffolk, Virginia. A copy is herewith presented. Again the “project,” “scheme,” and “aim” are manifest. The ring of determination travels through the tri-editorials. The “*Christian Unity*,” says Mr. McCune, “begins its career with fixed purposes and aims. It will earnestly contend that in *examining candidates for the ministry* all tests shall be laid aside except such as develope the faith *common* to the evangelical family of Christians.” (Specification V, Proof 6). In the “Prospectus” Mr. Thrall is already taken to task for shrinking from a substantial, realistic, and bodily oneness of actual visible organization to the movement! The co-editor of Mr. McCune exclaims, “We must *organize, band ourselves together as ministers and churches*; *this* was what was meant in New York in October 1873, at Cincinnati, October 1874, and at Suffolk in 1875. *Let the work of organization go on!*” The kingdom of God was now to “come with observation.” Some Texans meet in Convention at Somerville, April 30, 1875, and adopted the Organic Union plan. Dr. Wellons sweetly writes; “Lo there!” Linwood and Mt. Lookout loom in the horizon shortly after; Mr. McCune as sweetly murmurs, “Lo here!” Was it not part and parcel of the same movement?

And now, Moderator and Brethren, can there be a doubt on the mind of the Court that Mr. McCune is actually a member of a new anti-denominational association of ministers, organized under a Special Basis, for the express pur-

pose of striking at Denominationalism, and beginning a reconstruction of the Christian Church? I have shown you the first fact, under Specification V, Proofs 2, 3, 6, when exhibiting Mr. McCune's Plurality theory of membership, that a new independent church-organization does exist, "*known as the Union Christian Churches of America*,"—proclaiming that it is no "sect," because it receives all Christians, but is modeled after the apostolic type, on a non-excluding "divine law of organization," as Mr. McCune calls it, or on "a New Testament Basis." I have shown you the second fact, that "any minister" who "adopts" this Basis of independent association, and asks to be "enrolled," is "enrolled at his own request" into the new fellowship, and is henceforth an integral part of the new organization, and is known as a "Union Christian minister," ministerially identified with that body, and that "project," "scheme," and "aim." I have shown you the third fact, also, that Mr. McCune's name is the topmost signature in the list of names appended to the "Basis of Union" addressed to all the ministers and churches of North America,—a Basis "devised" in Cincinnati, and *adopted* and *signed* October 24, 1874, at the "Rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, Cincinnati, Ohio," where the Convention met, and confirmed at the Suffolk Convention, May, 1875. Signed, W. C. McCune and others. The fourth fact is irresistible, viz., that Mr. McCune has been "enrolled" upon that list, "at his own request," because he has complied with the conditions of entrance into the new organization, viz., adoption of the Basis. He may have enrolled himself for aught we know, for the Basis hails from the Rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, in Cincinnati, where it was unanimously adopted. He is; therefore, by his own act, a member of the new organization, for the purposes aforesaid. He has, by his own act, become subject to the jurisdiction of independent Councils and Conventions in general, an advisory jurisdiction, as is the case among all independent organizations, and, as I shall show, has become subject to the particular jurisdiction of an individual congregation, whose polity and creed he prepared for their

adoption upon this Basis, and in view of his own election as its pastor,—the minister being always, according to the independent polity, a member of the *congregation*, and eligible, by the congregation, to a seat in any Council or Convention, only as a “*delegate*” of the people. Having denied to the Presbyterian Denomination, as such, her right to be called “*a Church*”—that is, having denied the root principle of Presbyterianism, the right of one ecclesiastical rule over a plurality of Congregations organically bound under that rule, and having, by consequence, denied the right of all courts built upon that rule, and again, by consequence, the right of this Presbytery to say whether he shall accept a call or not, and be re-examined and installed or not, and whether he may belong to the new Anti-Denominational Association or not, he has flung his Presbyterianism to the winds, thrown our authority back in our faces, and chosen Independency as his polity. All this he has done, yet claiming his right to remain on the roll of this Presbytery for “indorsement” and “good standing.” There is a bravery in all this, which could only be developed where a corresponding undervaluation or neglect by Presbyterians themselves exists in reference to their own Government and Discipline. The course of Mr. McCune is utterly unaccountable on any other hypothesis. He is, and has been, for years, an actual and active member of the new Association of Independent Union Christian Ministers and Churches in America. It is thus he has felt at perfect liberty, unchallenged, “unquestioned,” while a member of this body, to carry on a crusade, even in its own bosom, and in the bounds of the Synod, as in the bounds of the neighboring Synod of Kentucky, against the doctrines and polity of the Presbyterian Church. Moderator, it is not true “*there is not much harm in all this.*” It is disloyalty to the Church, whose Standards of doctrine and order he has sworn to support, if his vows were not a mental reservation, “*Juravi lingua, mentem injuratum gero!*”

And now, Moderator, what avails it that Mr. McCune, only three days before this Court assembled, appears again, in public print four columns long, Commercial, December

30, 1876, to plead his case before the public, and, by desperate effort, seek to produce the impression, in advance, that he belongs to no anti-denominational association at all? that neither he nor the signers of the new Anti-Denominational "Basis of Union" are members of a distinct Association, designed to be permanent, with independent jurisdiction, under rules and laws and a creed and polity of their own construction and adoption? What avails it to say now, as judicial traverse comes on, that the "Basis of Union" was only a "tentative" platform for transient annual meetings, like Sunday School or Temperance Conventions, and nothing more was meant? Was, then, Mr. McCune's paper edited only for the sake of a Convention? Was his missionary propagandism in behalf of Organic Union, upon such principles as he advocated, only for the sake of a Convention? Sir, the apology is *too thin*, the disguise "too gauzy!" The "Basis of Union" is a Basis of church-fellowship, upon a special creed, upon a special polity, and for a special end, the reorganization of the whole Church of Christ, as the sounding language goes on. But now a metamorphosis occurs. Ovid tells us of Callisto changed to a bear, Actaeon to a stag, Jupiter to the form of Diana, and the sisters of Phaethon to weeping trees. Bossuet changes the dragon to a "milk-white hind!" Mr. McCune changes a Denomination to a "Convention," "a mere Convention!" Well, Sir, allow me to ask, when the Convention adjourns, where do the "Union Ministers and Churches" belong? Where is the "Union?" The Convention is expressly called "a Convention of the Union Christian Churches." There is an organization behind the Convention, and of which the Convention is a representative by "delegation" from the "Union." It is a vain excuse. In that Union Association, banded together upon its distinctive "*Basis of Union*," are two classes of ministers and members; those who have already severed their previous denominational relations, and those who "do not deem it expedient to sever existing denominational relations." Where, Moderator, when the Convention adjourns, do those who have severed their previous denominational relations belong?

They belong where Mr. McCune and the others who have not so done belong; they belong to the new Association of "Union Christian Churches and Ministers," into whose Organic Union bosom all the delegates retire upon adjournment. They are under the *dictio juris* of that Association, *i. e.*, under the jurisdiction of its creed, laws, polity, aim, and counsel. They have *one* jurisdiction in their Organic Church-fellowship. Mr. McCune has *two*, distinct and conflicting, a distinct "membership," a distinct "Church-fellowship." The organization is expressly said to be effected by "adoption" of a written "Basis of Union" and "enrollment" as members, the way in which every human organization is effected. Its "*initial step*" is expressly declared to be (1) the mutual voluntary reception of "each other," the first foundation, and (2) the reception of others. Is it only a Convention, with no Organic Union behind it of any Christian ministers, that presumes to posit a creed, a polity, and terms of admission into the visible Church? Is it a Convention that says, "We require no assent to any denominational peculiarity as a bond of *fellowship*?" And that "*we* will receive every Christian into *our fellowship*, and every Christian minister who teaches the common faith of the gospel." Who are the "*We* and *Our*?" Are they "delegates" simply to a Convention from no Association? "Fellowship" of what? Is it "fellowship" of a "Convention" whose members, after all, are *not* delegates? Is the "attempt to induce Christians to *unite* on the basis of their agreements" only an attempt to hold a Convention? Is the boasted Organic Union, after all, only the dissolving feature of an annual "Convention?" What, then, meant the cry, "We must *organize; organize!* Band ourselves together as ministers and Churches!" The desperate pleading of Mr. McCune only establishes with invincible demonstration the fact the prosecution assert and prove, that *he is, by his own act, a member of a new Organic Union Church organization*, whose purpose is the destruction of denominations, as such, and the reconstruction of the whole Church on a New Testament Basis. The prosecution submit that the proof is redundant to sustain

the specification before any Court in the world, that Mr. McCune has advocated and promoted the new anti-denominational association of independent "Union Christian Churches of America," of which he is a member, precisely as the specification sets forth—a movement utterly antagonistic in its principles to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church Mr. McCune has vowed to support.

The prosecution will not dwell on all the law points. They have already been quoted. The reference Digest, p. 304 (8), expressly forbids such conduct. The reference, p. 44 (II. V), asserts the right of the Presbyterian Church to have her own distinctive terms of communion, and her own polity, without subjection to a crusade against them by her own ministers. The references, pp. 411, 399, exhibit the vows of Mr. McCune to maintain the Standards, the truths, of the Gospel, and study the peace, unity, and purity of the church. The reference, p. 55 (6), requires him "to teach and preach according to the form of sound words in our confession and catechisms, and avoid and oppose all error contrary thereto," which he has not done in this new movement. The reference, Baird's Digest, p. 626, disqualifies from ministerial fellowship in the Presbyterian Church, the man who is "*confirmed and resolute in propagating his (erroneous) opinions among the people by a variety of methods, to the great scandal of the church, seducing and perplexing the unwary and unstable,*" departing from the truth and opposing his church. The reference, p. 630, Baird's Digest, expresses the pain of the General Assembly "that novel opinions, or at least opinions presented in a novel dress and appearance, have been *openly and extensively circulated*, and excited unusual alarm, while at the same time *they have given rise to much contention;*" and takes occasion to declare its "uniform adherence to the doctrines contained in our Confession of Faith, in their plain and intelligible form, and its own firm determination to maintain them against all innovations," earnestly entreating that "nothing subversive of these doctrines *may be suffered to exist or to be circulated amongst the churches.*" Neither ministry, Presbytery, or Synod may indulge such license, or be guilty of such

departure from our denominational law, and no minister may plead in justification of his course the transgression of any of the courts of the church, or encouragement by any of their members. The reference, p. 638, bids us "consider the pernicious tendency of the present *disorganizing plan*" of those who, under the specious pretense of honoring the Sacred Scriptures; would persuade you to "*reject all written or printed creeds and forms of discipline*," and whose polity is that "Christians have no power over one another to *cut off*, or *exclude*, or *unite*." It is the scheme of Mr. McCune drawn to the life and condemned. The reference, p. 648, delivers the unambiguous judgment of the assembly that the propagation of such doctrines "ought to subject the person or persons so doing, *to be dealt with by their respective Presbyteries* according to the discipline of the church relative to the propagation of errors," especially, p. 651 (77), if either he or they "manifest a lofty mind and independent spirit that will not be controlled by authority." It is not possible, Moderator, for our church more thoroughly to condemn the course of Mr. McCune, nor is it possible for him more thoroughly to set at naught the Standards, or renounce the vows that bind him to subjection, and the study of the church's peace, unity, and purity. Such conduct generally allowed would be subversive of the constitution of the church, and destructive of its very existence. I pass to the second specification.

SPECIFICATION II.

Linwood and Mt. Lookout.

This specification unfolds for us the next important fact in the progress of organic union in our midst. It was not enough for Mr. McCune that the Synod of Cincinnati, in 1870, should authorize his peculiar views and principles to be circulated throughout its bounds, nor that its pulpits should welcome their advocacy before the people, nor that Mr. McCune should be enrolled as a member of the new denomination. A particular, visible incorporation of differing ecclesiastical views and differing doctrinal beliefs must be

experimented into organic oneness in the bosom of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. Undismissed members who belonged to five different denominations must *unite* under Mr. McCune's lead in a new organization, on Mr. McCune's Organic Union Basis, prepared by him for their adoption. The new organization is effected. The *fiveness* becomes extinct in the *oneness*, and the *oneness* emerges by organic evolution from the *fiveness*. The unity in which the flock dwells, is not an inward unity, for "local convenience," upon a *minimum quid* examination. It matters not, at any time, whether suppliants for entrance can bring certificates, or whether they do not believe the Bible infallible, or Christ properly human. If they have "Saving Faith" without this, all well. The undismissed members go in "*on profession*." With most of them we have nothing to do. It is "outside our jurisdiction" as rulers in the house of God. It is with Mr. McCune, in this movement, we are concerned. The more we contemplate the movement, as it took shape under his hands, the more our wonder is challenged. It is a theological seminary and asylum. It trains and examines "*candidates for the ministry*." Specification V, Proof 4. It receives "all Christians," and all "ministers" too. (*Ibid.*) It is liberal moreover. A candidate for the sacred office is not required to explain "the *sense* in which he receives *every verse* of Scripture *from the beginning of the Bible to the end of it*." The exercise would be too long. Few would take orders at this rate! It is presumable, however, that those who do, like Ezra, the scribe of old, "*give the sense*" on the few texts submitted to their consideration, give it so as not to get outside the limits of the "common faith," *i. e.*, outside the points on which all agree as to personal salvation, while differing on everything else. Nothing more is needed. Theology is a dry subject. The day of "dogma" is gone. The hour of Organic Union has come. There is a slight departure here, a little inconsistent with the anti-creed rule that no "human deductions" are allowable, and that all that is needed is assent to words "*expressed in God's own language*," as that language is "commonly received." The new organization informs us that it is actually "about

to send out into the world " on a few well selected texts, or on the Basis of the Evangelical Alliance, either, the candidate may choose which, "those who are to preach the everlasting gospel," *i. e.*, the "common faith" as defined. It is evidently a parent society, though an infant yet! Mr. McCune's five in one have swept the whole compass of denominational activities, and gathered all the functions into unity. The whole "General Association" is mirrored in microcosm at Mt. Lookout. As to its officers, its polity speaks on this wise, that any one of them can be hopelessly turned out of office, without appeal, by a simple "request" of a "majority of the members voting at a meeting, *duly called for that purpose.*" This is one of the "Regulations of Expediency." As to discipline, the whole body simply "withdraw" from an offender. See Specification V, Proof 4. That Mr. McCune is the veritable father of this Linwood and Mt. Lookout "*Union Christian Church,*" the preparer and publisher of its Declaration, Preliminary Statements, Basis of Fellowship, and Regulations of Expediency, that he "actively co-operated in organizing it," "desired" to organize it, and "agreed with others" to organize it, and for the *expressly avowed purpose of putting into practical embodiment* his Organic Union Principles, and that this was what he meant, among other things, in his editorial of Aug. 1, 1875, three months only before the organization, saying he had "fixed aims and purposes," and what his co-editor meant, among other things, saying same date, "we must organize, band ourselves together as ministers and churches, *Let the work of organization go on!*" and what the rebuke to Mr. Thrall meant, same date (Specification V, Proof 6), will, I think, become evident to the Court. Its Declaration and Regulations of Expediency all flowed from the ink of Mr. McCune's pen. If the preparation of these by Mr. McCune is denied, the prosecution will introduce and submit additional testimony, which, however, they prefer not to submit unless by necessity. The Linwood and Mt. Lookout Manual was sent to many members of Presbytery previous to the installation of Mr. McCune. It is here upon your table. It needs no signature. It is

one large signature itself. "Dr. Skinner," says Mr. McCune, January 12, 1876, six weeks after the organization, "seems to make a painfully elaborate effort to prove, by some rather confusing quotations, that the Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout is responsible for the publication of the *Declaration and Preliminary Statements* which accompany the *Basis of Fellowship* of the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout. Certainly; who ever thought otherwise? His ulterior object seems to be *to make me also responsible*. I will gladly relieve him of any further trouble in this direction. I hereby declare that I *heartily approve* of the Declaration and Preliminary Statements accompanying the Basis of Fellowship of the Union Christian Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout, and respectfully *commend them* to the attention of the Christian public." I am sure every court would decide, especially a moral court, these words to be a veritable evidence of the Authorship of the Manual. The Prosecution is relieved of any doubt whatever. If the court, however, is not satisfied, we will introduce what will remove any doubt at once. Proof 4, Specification V, Charge I, reads thus: "We, giving to each other evidence that we are Christ's disciples, *propose*, by the help of God, to *organize* a '*Union Christian Church*,' in accordance with the precepts and examples of the New Testament." "We will, on scriptural evidence, cordially receive *all* Christians into this Church." "We will receive as ministers *all* who give us scriptural evidence that they are in fact ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, etc." "We will; we will; we deem, etc." What can be plainer from all these utterances than that Mr. McCune did thoroughly identify himself with those who proposed to form a new church, and was as truly one of their number in this whole work as any other person in that number? He himself is one of the "we" who propose to do this thing, and the attempt to evade this identification by pleading that *he* did not organize the Church is utterly vain. If the "we" organized it, then *he* also organized it, for he was one of the "we." The installation over, and the charge being made that because no elders had been ordained, the society had no

ordained officers of its own, Mr. McCune exclaims, "Does he deny that I am an officer, then, or does he deny my ordination? which?" Proof 2, Specification II, Charge II. Our ordination of Mr. McCune *does not make* him an officer in that church. Installation over an Independent or Congregational Church does make him an officer in that church, and does bind him to the administration of law and order in the house of God according to the special rules of that congregation. He is himself under those rules, not above them. He is a *de facto* member of the Church itself. In a congregation organized from five different denominations, by the agency of a Presbyterian minister, expressly throwing the Westminster Standards overboard, as the whole Congregational Body in this country had now done, and denouncing all human-made creeds, and the enforcement of denominational laws and enactments as essentially sinful, and even dispensing with one or both of the sacraments, if any object to receive them, mere danger has already passed into open destruction of the truth and order of Christ's House. To plead *historic* congregational "usage" here, is to plead a nonentity. In 1871, in National Ecumenical Council at Oberlin, Ohio, the witness, Mr. Halley, tells us that congregational historic usage was thrown to the winds with the Westminster Standards for the sake of a "new departure" in the interest of the Oberlin platform of liberalism that would receive, tolerate and fellowship the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, just as it is, with all its enormities. To such a church as this, organized on such a foundation, by Mr. McCune and others, Mr. McCune has joined himself. Repelling the charge, made by myself, that the spiritual government of the Church was in the hands of unordained committee-men, and that the Church had no ordained officers, and was, therefore, not scripturally *organized*, he exclaims, as I have said, "Does he deny that *I am an officer* then, or does he deny my ordination?" The question was not whether Mr. McCune was ordained, but whether that particular society had of itself, and claiming as its own, any ordained "officers" of the body. Mr. McCune comes forward, therefore, upon the fact of his installation, to affirm

the further fact that he is an "officer" of that particular society as well as an "officer" in his own. He is subject to its creed, laws, polity, and aim, such as they have been voted to be, and such as he specially prepared for the new "*Christian Union Church* at Linwood and Mt. Lookout." He is under that "*dictio juris*" of that vote of adoption by that society. He is bound by it, and must conform to it. He made the whole thing himself.

Proof 3 shows the time claimed for the so-called organization, and the distinctive title of the new society, as given above. The month of November, 1875, is the general date. The 7th, 8th, 10th and 24th are testified to as the special dates, by the Herald and Presbyter, the Presbytery's Investigating Committee, and a member of the organization whose testimony is given in the Presbyterian. It is expressly stated in that testimony, that although Mr. McCune was not a pastor, at that time, *i. e.* not acting "*officially*," yet he was present at the so-called organization "desiring" that just such an organization as it is, on precisely such a Basis as he made for it, "might be effected." How strong that desire was, and with what aims, we all know. Furthermore, upon his own confession, he was laboring a whole "year" among the people before the so-called organization took place, a people who were of various denominations, and who, for some time, had been holding union services, in the ordinary way, in such cases. It was a grand, a favorable opportunity, under the plea of uniting merely for "local convenience," to now venture the experiment of an "Organic Union Christian Church," on an anti-denominational Basis. It was "mutually agreed," he tells us, himself, "that we would look toward the organization of a Union Church." So much the worse if *such* a Church, on *such* a Basis, was the meditation of his mind for a whole "year" before the so-called organization took place. Utterly beside the question it is, if he means to say, it was *some other kind* of "Union Church" than the one that finally emerged. Utterly beside the question, if he means to say that the Linwood and Mt. Lookout people are chargeable with the dangerous views and principles into which he indoctrinated them, or whether he inocu-

lated *them*, or they inoculated *him*. It is of no sort of consequence to this Presbytery, in this case, how many or how few worked up the movement with Mr. McCune. He is the preparer and the author of its Declaration and its Creed, its Basis and its Polity. He has been trying to do for Ohio what some others did for Virginia and North Carolina—organize a Christian Church for himself, on his own plan, and call it Apostolic! He says “I *approved* the movement,” as though he were a bystander looking on and giving his opinion! He did more than approve it. He says “I *counseled* it,” as though his advice had simply been sought. He did more than “counsel it.” He says, “I *co-operated* with *those who did* organize this church,” as though he did not organize it himself. This is his manner of statement. Moderator, he did more than “*co-operate*” in the organization. He “*operated*” the organization itself, if any organization took place before the Council met. Mr. McCune devised and projected the whole movement from beginning to end, in the shape it took. He molded it to his will. He organized it himself, as truly as, and more truly than ever did any committee of Presbytery organize any church within our bounds, if it ever was organized before the Council met. The *people who were organized* into the organization did not organize it. The material molded into shape is not the molder. The original constituent elements out of which a thing is composed is not the plastic hand that imposes the form. No, sir. This ecclesiastical protoplasm is the work of Mr. McCune alone as the sole *Organizer* of the Organic Union Church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout, if it was organized at all before the Council met. He told us, August 1, 1875, only three months before, that he meant work, he meant business! And he has kept his word. Mt. Lookout answered to the call of Suffolk, “*Organize!*” Listen to the testimony of an officer of the Congregation (Proof 3): “Mr. McCune acted *merely* in the capacity of a Christian, desiring that such organization might be effected, his position *only* giving him *somewhat* greater prominence in the matter than any other brethren.” Oh, Mr. Moderator, it is a vain excuse, this word “*merely*,”

this word "*only*," this word "*somewhat*." And is the position of a Presbyterian minister of twenty years' standing, one who claims as an ambassador of Christ, by virtue of Christ's call to him, to bear rule in His house, only "*somewhat*" greater than that of unorganized individuals? "*Somewhat*" more "prominent!" Moderator and brethren, Mr. McCune is the creator of that organization such as it was. It is his workmanship, absolutely, so far as its ecclesiastical creed and form are concerned. It is the legitimate outgrowth of his Organic Union principles, the fruit of Organic Union Seed, planted a "year" before, his outstanding and embodied "project," "scheme," and "aim," the realization of his ardent hopes after long years of zealous advocacy and toil. It is the body of which Mr. McCune is the head, and it stands to-day, the creation of a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, upon principles destructive of his own and all other evangelical denominations. Mr. McCune's friends may seek to provide a shelter for his responsibility, by denying to this Presbytery, upon its Committee's request, the courtesy of the inspection of the records of their so-called organization, but that one fact will shine, in the trial of this case, as a demonstration, clear and convincing, that the Organic Union movement "co-operates" with ministers in disrespect of their own denominational laws and organic enactments, and secretes the evidence from the Court to which their pastors belong. That one act of refusing a courtesy, shall I not say a moral right, which no so-called "Sectarian" denomination would refuse to another, is sufficient ground for this Presbytery's order to Mr. McCune to cease his labors at that place. Were a foreign government to so act toward the United States, in the case of a civil minister, recalled to answer for transgression of the Constitution and laws, we know what the result would be. Such is the beauty of two jurisdictions, one for the pastor, another for the church! But the evidence is ample. And, as a Presbyterian minister, I solemnly aver, that no minister of the Presbyterian Church has any right to, either create, operate, co-operate, counsel, approve, or even lend his countenance for any plea, under

any consideration of any kind, to the organization or recognition of a church built on the principles Mr. McCune devised for the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Society.

The Specification alleges that, Mr. McCune having "co-operated" in this so-called organization, accepted a "call" to become its pastor, was examined, and installed by an irresponsible, because undelegated "Council," *without leave of, or dismissal from his Presbytery, and against advice*, and is, at present, the pastor of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church. The evidence of the acceptance of the call is taken from collaterals Nos. 3 and 4 of the Investigating Committee's Report, No. 3 being the statement of certain members of the "Council" that installed Mr. McCune, and from No. 4, being the statement of Mr. McCune himself, both affirming the fact. The evidence of the examination and installation of Mr. McCune by an irresponsible, because undelegated Council, is taken from collateral No. 3, being the statement of four out of "ten ministers connected with four evangelical denominations," also from the account of the proceedings of the installation service, published December 17, 1875, in the *Cincinnati Gazette*. The evidence that all this was done without leave of, or dismissal from the Presbytery is taken from collateral No. 4, found in Mr. McCune's own words: "If there is any Presbyterian law requiring a minister to *first gain the consent of his Presbytery*, before accepting a pastorate *outside of Presbyterian jurisdiction*, I have no knowledge of it." "If there is such a law," he says, "I will plead ignorance and indifference!"

Proof 5. The evidence, like most of it already furnished, is unnecessary, for the facts are officially before this Court already. The public indorsement by the Council of Mr. McCune, as "*an intelligent and thoughtful expositor of the Scripture, and a reliable teacher on all vital points of doctrine*," is also given, together with notice of his installation, according to the programme of the Council. The advice given to Mr. McCune was advice given by myself in the letter which I addressed to Mr. McCune, upon receipt of his invitation, or the published invitation of the Committeemen of Linwood and Mt. Lookout, to be present and give sanc-

tion and encouragement to the undertaking. The evidence that Mr. McCune is pastor, at present, of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, is referred to as upon record in the Minutes of the General Assembly, put there by order of the Presbytery, and also to the Records of the Presbytery at Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876, then inserting the omitted order of Mr. McCune's enrollment as "Pastor" on the statistical report of the clerk, April 13, 1876, at Glendale, to the then oncoming General Assembly, thereby giving official sanction to the installation of Mr. McCune by said Council, and to his present pastoral relation.

But, Moderator, before passing to the law of our church condemning this whole procedure of Mr. McCune, I must refer to the attempt of the defendant to shelter himself under the wing of Congregationalism, which, at Oberlin, Ohio, in 1871, abandoned the Westminster Standards in order to make room for just such doctrinal organizations as that of Linwood and Mt. Lookout. This we have had in express terms in the testimony before us from the defense. It is true, and can not be denied, that in the preamble to the resolution of the council, the church of Linwood and Mt. Lookout is carefully and precisely announced to the world as an "*undenominational*" church, and therefore not Congregational. It is true that Mr. Melish has testified that the Congregational body is a "sect," a "division" or "separation" from the "Body of Christ," one, among others, causing "an essentially sinful state of things." It is true that Mr. McCune himself is a member of another of these "sinful denominational divisions" and insists on standing upon its roll; but all this matters not in the desperate emergencies and exigencies of the defendant. If he can only show that the Linwood and Mt. Lookout church is what it is not, a Congregational church, a "sect," an "antisciptural and sinful" separation from the "Body of Christ," he thinks he has saved his cause and can escape the charge that he is opposed to denominations, as such. I therefore occupy a little time in considering *the Congregational mode of organizing a church*.

This mode is based upon the fundamental principle of

Congregationalism, which differences it from bald Independency. That principle is, *ecclesiastical* affiliation, fraternity, and fellowship, not merely spiritual or moral. No individual church is a Congregational church. It stands alone, a pure and absolute separatist, without any church fellowship whatever. The word Congregationalism does not mean the association of individual members in any particular church. It means the ecclesiastical affiliation and association of many similarly organized *churches* by means of a council common to all. The word Congregational relates to the fact of a number of congregations in ecclesiastical fellowship. Congregational churches are congregated, "affiliated and fraternized" churches, not merely Independent. Dexter on Congregationalism, p. 344. Now, their whole law of organization is based on this principle, and no churches are lawfully organized Congregational churches that are destitute of this formal association. The assertion of this principle necessitates the following things as essential to a regularly organized Congregational church: 1. There can be no such church apart from a regularly organized council; 2. There can be no regularly organized council apart from direct authority delegated from affiliated churches; 3. A regular church organization is effected by, with, and through the instrumentality of a regularly delegated council only, whether that council consists of pastors alone, or of pastors and laymen. In Congregational usage and polity, to organize a church regularly there must be a "Letter Missive" from a committee of those proposing to form the church, directed, not merely to individuals, but to neighboring Congregational churches, to formally meet, appoint, and send delegates, bearing "full credentials," (1) to justify the existence of the *pro re nata* council itself, (2) to consult with the members as to the expediency of the movement, and (3) to form the church if the way be clear. This council, thus called, can not organize itself as a council except by reading the "letter missive" to the churches and the credentials of the delegates. The examination of the letters of dismission, the basis, and the suitableness of the parties, comes

next. If the way be clear, the council then votes to advise the persons named in the list to proceed to form the proposed church, not yet formed, and makes arrangement for public services by the council to promote this end—to wit, the sermon, reading of the basis, prayer of recognition, giving through the council the right hand of fellowship from the churches invited to the members about to form the new church, address to the church, prayer, and benediction. After the reading of the basis, the special act by which the new church is constituted, is the solemn public rising and assent of the parties named in the list to the basis read there and then in the council. *After* this, and not before, it is competent for the new church to elect its officers, and choose and call its pastor.

Such is the Congregational polity and usage, upon the authority which Mr. McCune and Mr. Halley present to this Court as competent testimony in the case. Dexter, pp. 162-166. Anything else than this is bald Independency. It is not Congregationalism because it lacks the fundamental principle of "affiliation" of churches, the existence of the Council, and the actual presentation and reception, by delegated authority, of the right hand of fellowship. Now, Mr. Moderator, a cloudless sun, in mid heaven, on the fourth day of July, is not more clear than the fact that the Linwood and Mt. Lookout organization was as gross a violation of Congregational polity and usage, as it was of Presbyterian law itself. That polity and usage are pleaded in its justification. I affirm that neither one nor the other lends a shadow of right to such an abnormal and nondescript performance as that was. Mr. McCune claims that the organization was effected before the Council met. I affirm that, when a Council is possible, Congregational polity requires the formation of the Church, its very inception as a Church, to take place at the time and in the very presence of a regularly delegated and regularly organized Council. I say that according to Congregational polity, every member of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Council helped to organize that Church, on the very principles on which it was founded, Mr. McCune himself, and all the Presbyterians who were present.

I further affirm, on the very testimony introduced here by the defendant, that that Council was a usurpation in every particular, a novelty, an innovation, that even Independency itself would reject. It was an unauthorized, new thing under the sun, destitute of ecclesiastical authority throughout. It was a "voluntary club of men." I care not whether the organization is claimed to have been made either *before* the Council or *at* the Council, it was in the face of Congregational polity. There was no affiliation of Churches. No letter missive was sent to any Church whatever. No credentials from any Church were presented, and any right hand of fellowship that was extended was simply the right hands of the individuals of the Council, who, if they deem themselves to be each one a Church, are the strangest churches this world has ever seen, being pastor, people, committee-men, deacons, trustees, choir, sexton, and church-edifice, all in each person. Moderator, they have no right to offer a right hand of fellowship. They had none to offer. The ceremony was a delusion. And whether we regard Mr. McCune's relations to the "we" who proposed to form the Church, and who, he says, did form the Church, or to the Council, he is still, on the evidence adduced in this Court, one of the parties in that transaction.

But still further, while there is abundance to show that the organization of this Church was in violation of Congregational polity, there is enough to show also that the real organization of that Church, unauthorized as it was, did actually take place at the time of the Council, and not before. The special act by which a Congregational Church is constituted is declared by Dr. Dexter, who is one of the witnesses of the defendant, to be the public formal assent, before the Council, of the members named in the list, to their Basis of Faith and Covenant, read to them by the Council. Let it be carefully observed that the recognition of a new Church, and the constituting of a new Church, and the address to the new Church thus constituted, all occur during the same Council. Upon evidence in Court, these things did occur, viz., the list of members forming

the Church presented to the Council, the appointment of special services, the reading of the Basis, the recognition, the sermon, and the right hand of fellowship. Let it be further observed that the Preamble of the Resolution offered in Council states that the parties to be organized had "*now resolved to organize themselves permanently as a Church of Jesus Christ*;" that they had "*resolved upon an undenominational organization*;" that the members of the Council were present to give them "*fraternal counsel and aid in the undertaking in which they were about to engage*;" and the Resolution, as adopted, declares that they were thereupon recognized as a Church.*

Now, Sir, what have we in this matter? We have (1) the indubitable fact that the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church was not organized previous to the Council, and that all argument to the contrary is mere special pleading, and a vain attempt at escape. We have (2) the fact that the mere appearance of Congregationalism, without its authority and regular mode of procedure, was given to the petitioners, and that was all. To have called a Council regularly, and to have proceeded regularly, would have been "*denominational*," and this was just what this new movement proposed not to be in any sense whatever. The demonstration is complete that the Society was veritably organized at that time, and not before. But in either case, whether before

* It is notorious, as every member of that Council knows, that instead of the expression "*permanently organize*," the expression "*provisionally organize*" was used in the Preamble, as read to that Council, and that Dr. Morris himself, upon the instance of Mr. McCune, erased the word "*provisionally*" and inserted the word "*permanently*" in that Preamble. This is proof conclusive that the Church had not been organized either "*provisionally*" or "*permanently*" before the Council met. Furthermore, the invitation I received from Dr. Morris, dated December 13, 1875, only two days before the Council convened, used these words: "I think we can safely take part in *the Council by which this Church is to be organized*, and as safely instal Brother McCune as its pastor;" adding that he intends to "*preach at his installation, and share in the work of organization*." Further evidence could have been supplied, but the Presbytery, under the remarks of Dr. Morris, *denied to the Prosecution the right to introduce testimony rebutting the allegations of the defendant*, who gathered up his witnesses from day to day, as he needed them for his case.

or at the time, it is no organization at all, even according to Congregational polity, but simply an independent association of individuals, like any other independent society, whether medical, botanical, chemical, or agricultural. The defendant pleads that this is an exceptional case, and that the Congregational polity makes allowance for exceptional cases, and that the Church did organize itself before the Council met. The authority of Dr. Dexter and other testimony is relied upon to show that in an exceptional case individuals may organize themselves into a church, but this is no more Congregationalism than it is Presbyterianism or Methodism, for all these denominations allow the same thing. Does this mean that the exception is the rule? that a Church not Congregationally organized is congregationally organized, or not Presbyterially organized is Presbyterially organized? No, Sir, the exceptional church is not a Congregational church, and can not be, because it is the exception. It is a purely independent church. Moreover, what constitutes the exception? It is not peculiarity of views. It is not variety of views. It is not even the impossibility of having a denominational church. It is the *impossibility of calling a council*, arising out of the fact that no sister Congregational churches are near or within reach. In other words, that the persons to be organized are so far from the Congregational "aque-duct," as Dr. Dexter calls it, that the people have to "dig down" anywhere in the sand to find "living water." Dexter, p. 238. I quote him as Mr. Halley quoted him. It is only when the people are "grouped upon some far Pacific slope, hundreds of miles from any church, of any name, with communication almost interdicted by the distance and peril of the way;" when they can not "put themselves into communication with the rest of the world;" when they would be subjected "to delay, trouble, expense, often disappointment and dispersion;" when they are "abnormal and incomplete;" when they are "in some extreme border wilderness;" and when it is "impossible to secure the counsel and co-operation of existing Congregational churches in the act of their formation." Dexter, pp. 238, 239, and 162.

To what desperate argument is the defendant compelled to resort in his plea that the Mt. Lookout church is an exceptional case, that its peculiar organization was an independency forced upon it by necessity of position and circumstance impossible to be avoided? Could the defendant himself, so near the Vine Street, Seventh Street, and Columbia Street Congregational aqueducts, and so near so many other churches, plead that a "letter missive" could not be sent to those churches to convene and send delegates to organize his new enterprise? Will any one say that Linwood and Mt. Lookout, in the suburbs of Cincinnati, are like some isolated spot, some Sahara desert, or Pacific slope, or far off island in the sea, or extreme border wilderness, or Himalaya plain, utterly beyond the possibility of calling a regular Congregational council, and obliged by force of circumstances to extemporize an independent, unauthorized club of ministers and laymen to meet and form and recognize the new church? Moderator, the very nature of the defense is the strongest argument against it. Such was the common fame as to this new movement, in connection with Mr. McCune's name, and such the opposition of the best part of our community, that none of our churches would have answered his *letter missive* except by respectful negation. It was not an exceptional case. By no dint of argument can such character be adduced to justify the council, the formation of the church such as it is, or anything connected with it. It is a new type of Independency, a new movement, and nothing else—the assertion of extremest liberalism and individualism. It is organic unionism, in defiance of all scriptural polity, and of the polity of every organized denomination on earth. If our Congregational brethren choose to father, foster, receive, and fellowship the McCune enterprise, with its doctrines and its principles and its violation of even their own exception, it is their Lookout and not our Lookout. The Oberlin platform of 1871 will gain no credit by the addition.

But now, Mr. Moderator, the Prosecution cares not a farthing whether this entire performance was Congrega-

tionalism or not. Mr. McCune may have a *shadow* of Congregationalism over his church and over himself as its pastor; but if he had both shadow and substance, it would not help him in the least degree in the case before us. The true question is, not whether Mr. McCune has complied with Congregational polity and usage, but whether he has complied with Presbyterian polity and usage, in accordance with his solemn ordination vows; whether he has not advocated principles and doctrines, and put those principles and doctrines into practical form at Linwood and Mt. Lookout in each and every of the particulars specified, which, if generally allowed, would utterly subvert Presbyterian law and order, and destroy the Presbyterian denomination itself, and turn it into the new departure of the Oberlin platform of 1871.

That this whole procedure of Mr. McCune was in contravention of the organic law of the church, by which every Presbyterian minister is bound, is evident by reference to the standards. 1. *As to the organization.* No Presbyterian minister has a right to organize any church whatever, either inside or outside the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, without leave granted or permitted by the Presbytery. Organization of Churches is a function reserved to the Presbytery by the Constitution, and no minister may usurp that function upon any pretext whatever, nor for any reason. “The *Presbytery* has power to *form*, or receive, new congregations.” Digest, p. 144. “Except in frontier and destitute settlements, where it is *made* a part of the business of evangelists to organize Churches without the previous action of some Presbytery directing or permitting it, etc., since in Chap. IV. (Form of Gov.) no mention is made of any such power being lodged in the hands of an individual minister.” p. 173 (49). With the above exceptions, the rule is absolute. It is not limited to the formation of *Churches* merely *within* Presbyterian jurisdiction. If a minister may not usurp the Presbytery’s function within her jurisdiction, he may not outside of it. The function of organization, inside or outside, does not pertain to the individual, in any case, by virtue of his ministerial office. Organization is the

exercise of a joint or several power, and only exercised, individually, by express delegation, for unavoidable reasons, like that of the Pacific slope, or extreme border wilderness. It is no part of *potestas ordinis*, but solely of *potestas jurisdictionis*. Even Presbytery can only exercise it where she has jurisdiction, and that jurisdiction is excited by "application" of petitioners desiring organization. But if a Presbytery may not organize outside of her jurisdiction, *a fortiori*, a minister may not, who has neither jurisdiction nor function to that end. Least of all may a minister organize, within the very bosom of his own Presbytery, and under the very eyes of his brethren, a society founded on principles destructive of his own Church's faith and order; much less morally approve, counsel, co-operate, or create such an enterprise. Palpable, in any case, outside or inside, the jurisdiction of the Church was the breach of comity and order in the manner of the organization. The general rule for procedure in organization is that, "at the time appointed for the purpose, after prayer for Divine direction and blessing, the presiding minister or committee should first receive from those persons to be organized into the new Church, if they have been communicants in other Churches, *letters of dismissal and recommendation*; and next examine and admit to a profession such persons as may offer themselves, and may be judged suitable to be received on examination." p. 107 (6). And this is the very rule Dexter himself has laid down. Picture the scene at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, on the representation here brought in. A company of church-members undismissed, voting the paper "we, giving to each other evidence that we are Christ's disciples, *propose*, by the help of God, to organize a *Union* Christian Church, etc.," thus attempting to become, *ipso facto*, a Church of Christ, Mr. McCune, a Presbyterian minister, presiding, and then the Council afterwards again receiving these names and recognizing the transaction! The undismissed members "joining on profession!" Joining what? And Mr. McCune justifying his course because it was "outside of our jurisdiction." I will not trust myself, Moderator, to speak what I feel, or

what I think of such a transaction, so in violation of any decent rule in any so-called "sectarian" denomination, and so in the face of that apostolic precept, "Let everything be done decently and in order." But, then, it is "Organic Union," a gleam of the millennium! 2. As to *accepting a pastoral call*. No Presbyterian minister may accept a call to become a pastor anywhere, except by leave of his Presbytery. The wisdom of this rule, as well as of the first, is the shield of the Presbyterian Church. "The call" from any Church, inside or outside our jurisdiction, "shall be presented by the Presbytery under whose care the person or persons called shall be." "No minister or candidate shall receive a call but through the hands of the Presbytery." Digest, p. 409. "No minister shall be translated from one Church to another, nor shall he receive any call for that purpose, but by permission of the Presbytery." p. 410. The rule is absolute, without any exceptions. In every case, "Commissioners properly authorized" must represent to the Presbytery the reasons for the call, then Presbytery will judge whether it shall be placed in his hands. Inside or outside her jurisdiction, this is the law. It is not difficult to see why no application from any persons in Linwood and Mt. Lookout was made to the Presbytery of Cincinnati; nor is it credible that Mr. McCune, having been for twenty years a Presbyterian minister, should not well understand that, had any such application been made, it would have run at least the hazard of rejection. Besides, it would have been utterly inconsistent with the principles of Mr. McCune and his new enterprise to ask any favors of, or recognize "distinctive," "denominational laws." It was the same principle of resistance to such enactments, and whereby Mr. McCune was emboldened to usurp the Presbyterian power of organization, even where the Presbytery had no jurisdiction, that repeated itself in the acceptance of a call to a pastoral charge in the very bosom of the Presbytery, without her permission. Independency and Organic Union simply determined to treat with indifference and disrespect, the laws of the Presbyterian Church, as well as of the Congregational Church, in the

case of her own ministers. Mr. McCune was intelligent in all this, and acted consistently with his independent polity. His plan was indexed from the first. 3. As to the *Council*, *Examination*, and *Installation*. It was a purely voluntary, extemporized, and undelegated affair, convened not according to Congregational usage. The exceptional case had no existence here. It represented nobody. There was not a delegate in it. No sister churches sent or accredited any representatives to it. It was not countenanced by any duly organized or actually recognized Church whatever. The Linwood and Mount Lookout Church is, to this hour, without ecclesiastical recognition from any denominations or churches whatever. It was the expedient of Mr. McCune and his friends. Any company of ministers gathered on the street, at any time, and turning aside to any room, to vote and do anything they pleased, upon the personal request of anybody, would be as genuine a Church Council as was this. It was no Church Council whatever. It was an Organic Union "Convention," met to indorse Mr. McCune's enterprise, and give it the "right hand of fellowship," from nobody but themselves, as also to give Mr. McCune himself an indorsement, and form a pastoral relation between himself and Linwood and Mount Lookout Church. It was known, well known, that Mr. McCune had not obtained leave of his Presbytery, for it was a common conversation when the invitation to the Council and the Manual were transmitted to certain persons of the Presbytery. Our Standards, and our practice as a Church, recognize no such proceeding as that one of our ministers may, by indirection, secure an installation for himself in such a way. We have allowed our ministers, under special circumstances, to take part in orthodox Congregational Councils, when they are properly called, and in a rare case to be installed over an orthodox Congregational Church. What we shall do since the Oberlin "New Departure" remains to be seen. But we do not allow them to sit in Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, or Quaker Councils, much less in a Council called by no Churches, and extemporized for the purpose of giving the right hand of fellowship to an enterprise built upon a Basis

and a Creed so destructive as that of Linwood and Mount Lookout. Mr. McCune's resort to such an expedient, for the purpose of securing installation, was an aggravated violation of our law requiring him not to receive any call, anywhere, without leave of his Presbytery. The liberty that will allow Mr. McCune's course, in this matter, is a liberty that will allow any member of this Presbytery to go and organize with others, or co-operate in organizing, a Baptist Church, or an Episcopalian, or a Quaker Church, or any kind of a Church on any kind of Basis, just as well. There is no limit to such liberty. Any minister may be instrumental in calling any number of his brethren together, at any time, and to constitute themselves into a so-called "Council," do what they choose, responsible to none, and call themselves "delegates" or representatives of Churches, when they represent no Churches, because delegated by none. It is boundless license. Under such auspices, Mr. McCune was installed. The testimony is clear. "Those in attendance were not *delegated* by any ecclesiastical bodies, but came simply as individuals," upon the invitation of Mr. McCune's Church, organized out of undismitted members, and after its own fashion. This is *not* in "accordance with a familiar congregational usage." Congregational usage never knew of such an instance. Everything was done "*entirely on their own responsibility*," and the fact that members of that Council were "Christian men" does not help the matter. By a Council, composed in this way, Mr. McCune secured his installation, having first been re-examined, and then indorsed as "*an intelligent and thoughtful expositor of the Scriptures, and a reliable teacher on all points of doctrine*." That Mr. McCune again violated the law of the Presbyterian Church is clear. If he may not accept a call, without permission of the Presbytery, he may not be instrumental in organizing a Church on a new Basis, and then instrumental in developing a new kind of Council to recognize that Church, and then again to re-examine and install him on a call he had no right to accept, a call made out by undismitted members belonging to other churches still. Mr. McCune was as much bound to ask

leave of his Presbytery to be installed as to accept a call. He knew this well in his experience as a pastor. If it belongs to Presbytery "to examine" and "install" ministers, it belongs to Presbytery to *permit* them, or *forbid* them to be installed by any Council, or by any court in the world. Digest, p. 144 (VIII). But it was all part and parcel of Mr. McCune's Organic Union scheme to act in this way. The conviction, in his soul, that the enforcement of "denominational laws" and "organic enactments" is an oppression of the conscience, and a deprivation of Christian and ministerial liberty, and his determination to exhibit his Organic Union freedom to the world, prompted him to violate the whole law of his Church in one bold movement, proclaim his doctrines, start a "Union Christian Church," receive a call, get up a council, be re-examined, re-indorsed, and installed over the church, all without dismissal from or leave of his Presbytery. It was a bold move, an intelligent move. All that remained to be done, in order to make the triumph complete, was to officially enrol him as "Pastor," so affixing the imprimatur and sanction of the Presbytery to his installation, under all the circumstances, and so confirming his relation to the Linwood and Mt. Lookout church, an act formally done by the Presbytery at Glendale, April 13, 1876. And this, too, in face of the public discussion between himself and the Herald & Presbyter, the latter warning him in the following words, when speaking of what it calls his "project," "scheme," "aim," viz.: "We are at loss to understand how Mr. McCune can be willing to retain a connection with the Presbyterian Church! We should suppose that he would pass at once from an old organization that is unauthorized and extra-Scriptural to a new one on a New Testament Basis!" (Proof 6.) The Presbyterian Church of the Reunion, in the name of her Standards, lifts her voice of remonstrance against the course pursued by Mr. McCune herein. Boldly, Mr. McCune steps forth to say: "*I have violated no Presbyterian law whatever, in accepting my present pastorate, nor in anything I have done pertaining to the Union Christian Church at Linwood and Mt.*

Lookout !!!" He does more. He challenges the right of this court to call him to account for the propagation of his principles. Appealing to the progress of organic union views, and Oberlin Congregationalism within the last decade, and the encouragement received since his connection, ten years ago, with this Presbytery, he says: "This might have been a fair question *eight or ten years ago*, but it is certainly too late now!" (Proof 5.) Under cover of the plea that, because the Linwood and Mt. Lookout church is "*outside Presbyterian jurisdiction*," therefore, he, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, is not required to get permission from his Presbytery to accept a call and be installed, he says: "Any *petty question* about the formality of *first asking leave*, may interest hair-splitting ecclesiastical lawyers, whose vocation it is to tithe mint, anise, and cummin. If Presbytery says the *thing done is right*, I will be content. If she says I should have first asked leave, I will plead *ignorance and indifference*" (Proof 6); in plain Saxon, "I will say, I didn't know, and I don't care;" this shall be my plea. This was said, in the Presbyterian, February 12, 1876. The Presbytery's official enrollment of Mr. McCune as "Pastor" of Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church was April 13, 1876, just two months after! He judges that, because the church is "outside" of jurisdiction, he has a right to act as if he were outside of jurisdiction also! that jurisdiction over the person and conduct of a minister *depends* upon jurisdiction over the particular church with which he is connected, whereas it rests upon these two facts alone (1), that he is himself a member of the Presbytery, no matter where his church may be, and (2), that the laws transgressed pertain to the *minister*, and not to the church. Mr. McCune can not divest himself, at pleasure, of his ordination vows, nor relieve himself of obedience to these laws on the plea that his church is "outside of Presbyterian jurisdiction," or on the plea of ignorance; *ignorantia juris non excusat*. Outside or inside, it is all the same so far as his membership and these laws, made for ministers, and not for churches, are concerned. Any dispute of this fundamental doctrine, he calls a "petty question." Any

defense of it, a "hair-splitting vocation of ecclesiastical lawyers, tithing mint, anise, and cummin." If arraigned for violating it, he says, "I don't know, and I don't care." Such is Organic Union!

Moderator, I am well aware that, as against the positions the Prosecution here take, and as against the organic enactments of the Presbyterian Church, the plea of "Usage" has been advanced, and may yet be advanced in the present case. I am aware the argument for non-enforcement of denominational law, and for the grant of liberty according to the "Spirit of the Age" is crowned with the argument of "Usage" in reference to the permission given some ministers, under rare circumstances, to be installed as pastor over orthodox Congregational Churches. Mr. McCune has made that plea. Others have made that plea. I deem it, therefore, a part of my duty to meet that argument, and vindicate the Presbyterian Church against its influence and effect wherever made. Especially do I deem it loyalty to our "Reunion" that, here and now, it should be met. It has assumed a latitude it never dared to measure any time before. I regard the use of that argument of usage as fatal to the peace, unity, and purity of our church. It is a dangerous plea to make. If usage consecrates the right of Mr. McCune to do as he has done, "usage" will consecrate the ruin of the Presbyterian Church. I concede that a continuous custom, or practice, grown up under an express law, is the best exposition of that law, for the law itself is the basis on which the usage rests. The usage has prescription to support it. I concede also, that where there is no law, usage may itself grow to a general law which it might be mischievous to abate. But neither of these cases is the case before us. Not the first, for the Presbyterian Church has no law, no prescription upon any such usage as that Mr. McCune claims is founded. There is no statute for such a thing to rest upon. Not the second, for we have express laws of our denomination forbidding the very things that Mr. McCune has done, whether as to propagating his Organic Union views, practicing an independent polity, organizing a Church,

accepting a call, or being re-examined and installed by an undelegated or other Council, without permission of his Presbytery. Moreover, before usage may be pleaded, where no law exists, it must be shown to be established well by time, without interruption, peaceably enjoyed, and consistent with the public good. But all these tests of usage are violated here. The practice claimed by Mr. McCune never was established by time; it never has been uninterrupted; it never was peaceably enjoyed; it never conduced to the peace and good of the Presbyterian Church. Apart from the Linwood and Mt. Lookout accompaniments, it began about the beginning of the present century, and was a compromise even with Congregationalism, it has been severely interrupted, it was never peaceably enjoyed, though acquiesced in for a period, and it produced only "harm" to the Presbyterian Church. With the Linwood and Mt. Lookout accompaniments, I think it may safely be said, it never was known in all the history of the Church on earth. It has no prescription. May it never become a precedent! The usage as to Congregational Churches, our allowing Presbyterian ministers to receive their call and be installed, never dispensed with jurisdiction over such ministers, nor allowed them to receive such call or be installed, but by permission of the Presbytery. The usage rested on the Plan of Union of 1801. It was a bad prescription, and was abrogated, as unconstitutional from the beginning, in 1838. All the force, and all the right, the usage had, in reference to Congregational Churches, and guaranteed by the Union plan of 1801, fell, when it fell in 1838. If the usage did once exist, it yet came from a prescription now gone. It grew out of that plan. Our Reunion has called us back again to the "old paths," the "good old ways" antecedent to the time of those sad controversies of which that bad prescription was the seed. We are cautioned not to make any "needless or offensive" reference to the past, much more not to revive the practices that gave the Church her trouble. "It is the duty of all our Church judicatories, ministers and people of the united Church," say our Concurrent Resolutions, "to avoid all needless and offensive re-

ference to the *causes* that divided us; and, in order to avoid the revival of past issues, *by the continuance of any USAGE in in either branch of the Church* that has grown out of former conflicts, it is earnestly recommended to the lower judicatories that they *conform their practice in relation to all SUCH USAGES*, so far as is consistent with their convictions of duty, to the general custom of the Church *prior to the controversies that resulted in the separation.*" Digest, p. 93. Those controversies began soon after the plan of 1801. Again, where any "usage" is thus related to the conflicts of the past, a "usage asserted and defended by some, denied and discarded by others," its "abolition" is demanded. And this Mr. McCune and this Presbytery have voted for. I submit, Moderator, that by the Terms of our Reunion, no man is entitled to plead Congregational "usage," and appeal to some few yet existing instances of it, as shown by our Assembly Minutes, much less under the Oberlin "New Departure." These are the remnants of a "usage" against which the assembly has advised our ministers and all our courts. Least of all can these cases be pleaded as an argument for Mr. McCune's course at Linwood and Mt. Lookout. The enterprise of Mr. McCune and his whole course herein is without prescription, and without a shadow of defense from "usage" of any kind whatever in our Body as to Congregational Churches. It is a pure inception, an innovation, a "new thing under the sun," a "sore evil" to the Church of Christ. It is without a parallel. It rests its claim on no analogy that can be cited, as allowed, in the whole history of the Presbyterian Church. It is a new development of the times. To lean for support on the "usage" of the past is to lean on a tree with its roots cut away, upon a custom that produced disaster and disruption. It is proposed that we fraternize with this Organic Union movement by the recognition of this enterprise, and by the plea that "usage" justifies the toleration, by this Presbytery, of the double, contradictory, anomalous, and anti-pro-denominational subscription and allegiance of its pastor. Moderator and Brethren, it is our bounden duty, not merely as Presbyterians, but as Christian ministers and elders, to

resist this bad inception. Soon, indeed, if not already, as Mr. McCune suggests, it may be "too late!"

"*Principiis obsta; sero medicina paratur.*" The course of Mr. McCune herein is utterly at war with all his ordination vows and the true deportment of all ministers. How can the Presbyterian Church allow a minister to have jurisdiction over all her churches, when even the inspection of the records of his own is formally denied? How permit one minister to ignore, in theory and in practice, our whole Form of Government and Book of Discipline, and even the fundamental doctrines of our system, and publicly teach contrary to the same? By what right send such a minister to our General Assembly "which represents in one body all the *particular churches* of this denomination" (Digest, p. 200), when he represents a church *not* of "this denomination?" Is it ingenuous to plead the "usage" of the past, now interdicted, for an enterprise that rests on no prescription; when such past usage *had* prescription and permission both? To plead that argument is vain. What has no prescription is an innovation.

The argument of usage may be, in these times, the ruin of our peace and unity and purity. It is another name for the non-enforcement of our Standards. It is the destruction of our true liberties and rights. Charles I pleaded usage for the exaction of money from his subjects. We know what came of that. Henry VIII did the same thing. We know what came of that. Usage made Magna Charta a dead letter, just as usage may make our Presbyterian Constitution here the same. Were Hampden, Cromwell, and Sydney wrong? Once the Presbyterian Church allowed corresponding members to deliberate and vote in our Courts. We know what came of that. Under the usage, grounded in the plan of 1801, a host of troubles came. It should be enough for us to know, when pleading usage, that no usage can be pleaded against a positive Constitution to the contrary. Nothing against the church's peace and welfare may be tolerated. "*Contra Rempublicam, privilegium non valet.*" And where a bad practice arises, it must be abolished. What in the beginning was vicious, does not

become valid by lapse of time. So is the maxim of common law as true, more true for the Church than for the State. Whatever is contrary to law may not be done by circumvention. No Court may decide against the Constitution. A bad usage never avails to bar the valid plea of a constitutional objection, or the welfare of the Church. We have no "*Toleration Act*" for Mr. McCune, no "Custom of the King" to plead, no "usage." To make usage, where it is a violation of law, an argument for its own continuance, is to make transgression its own defense. Brethren, let us stop this plea. "Stand in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls." "Sure I am," says Lord Bacon, "that *Stare decisis* is a good principle, and antiquity hath its wisdom. *Stare super vias antiquas*, stand upon the old ways. The very word and style of Reformation used by our Savior, *ab initio non fuit sic*, was applied to Church matters, and those of the highest nature." It will be our life, and strength, and peace, and unity, and purity, and historic glory, in future as in past, if we observe to do what our ordination vows bind us to do, not as oppressed, but as free, loyal, and loving Presbyterians.

And so may it please the Court! The prosecution present to you these charges and this argument, asking of the Court, in the name of the Presbyterian Church, a definitive judgment upon the allegations here made, and if regarded as proved, a definitive condemnation of those doctrines and that course, which are not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but which—the one if generally accepted, the other if generally allowed—would be totally subversive of her constitution and of her very existence as a distinctive denomination. The prosecution ask, in the name of the Church, still more,—a definitive arrest of the propagation of such errors, and a positive injunction that they shall not be taught by any minister under our jurisdiction, nor allowed to be taught in any of

our churches. For what further action may be necessary in view of the present relations of Mr. McCune to the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, and to the General Association of "Union Christian Churches" of which he is an active member, the Prosecution refer the Court to the law of our denomination, already so abundantly cited.

The hour is a momentous one for the Presbyterian Church, if the interest taken abroad in this case is any sign, and if the omens in the church at large are fraught with any lesson! Never before in all our history has there been such a disposition to put "Union before Truth" as there is to-day. Who knows not that times of Union are times of peril to the Truth of Christ? And what loyal minister of the Presbyterian Church is ignorant that the truth of Christ and the order of the heavenly house may not be sacrificed for any external fellowship, however great, nor for any considerations of expediency or economy? It is time the appeal to "conscience," "liberty," "private judgment," "usage," all perverted as it is, were hushed. Conscience has no rights against conscience. Liberty under law has no rights of disobedience to the law itself. Vows of allegiance to the Presbyterian Church have no rights of reservation, none of revolution, against the enforcement of her doctrine and her order. Truth in the inward parts, sincerity adopting and approving her standards as "agreeable to the word of God," has no right to traduce those standards as "sectarian." Private judgment has no rights of public transgression. Usage has no rights against the welfare of the church. Allow such license to go on "unquestioned," let Presbyterian ministers indulge it everywhere, and the muse of history, now in this Court, will write the epitaph "*Fuit Ecclesia Presbyteriana*" over the grave of the Presbyterian Church before this generation shall have passed away! We know the progress of error, and the arts she practices to twine herself around the human understanding. "*Toleration*" first, and only toleration, is all she asks. Grown to greatness, she next demands "*Equality of Rights*" with the Truth itself, and then the contest comes. Last of all, "*Supremacy*," the crown

upon her head, and Truth dethroned ! Allow your ministers and elders to pursue the course of Mr. McCune, and claim subscription to your standards as a valid plea, for resting on your roll, then measure, if you can, the march of error ! So the Rationalistic Lutherans of Germany all signed the Augsburg Confession. So the Socinians of Geneva, after Calvin's day, all signed the Calvinistic Symbols. So the subscribers to the Heidelberg Catechism became Pantheists, Deists, and Unitarians. So Broad Church Anglicans subscribe the thirty-nine articles. So some Mohammedans subscribe the Nicene Creed. So Mr. McCune subscribes the standards and preaches the doctrines of Organic Union, invoking the cry of "toleration" in his own favor and "sectarianism" against his own denomination. Moderator, sectarianism and ecclesiastical denominations are not synonymous and identical terms. Presbyterianism is not "sectarianism." It is a Divine *Testimony*. The Presbyterian Church is not a "sect." It is a Divine *Foundation*. And well may it stand, if the best assaults of all its foes are found to be but misinterpretations of the Word of God, and vain theories spun from their own imaginations. But a worse than Galatian bewitchment has touched I know not how many ministers of Christ, I know not how many true Christians. "*Union before Truth*" is the popular accent of the day. The music goes sounding through all our Paradise. "*Down with dogmatism*" is the cry. It means unquestioned toleration. It is not hard to tell its source. If you will but follow Ithuriel and Zephon in their search, you shall soon find the lurking "spirit of the age," spotted with indifference to the Truth of God, whispering through Organic Union,

"Squat like a toad, at the church's ear,
Assaying by its cunning art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as it lists, phantasms and dreams,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride."

God speed the day when the Presbyterian Church again, as of old, shall enforce her constitution and her laws ! God

speed the day when all her ministers shall be loyal and true—priests whose “lips shall keep knowledge, and the people learn the law at their mouth,” for they are “messengers of the Lord of hosts;” when, strong in the confidence of sound doctrine and a heavenly order, they shall be ready to confront with apostolic zeal those “whose mouths must be stopped,” who “subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not;” when they shall “give heed to themselves and the doctrine, and continue in it, knowing that in doing this they shall “save both themselves and them that hear them.” Such a ministry the Presbyterian Church has enjoyed before, in the days of her martyr-witness for the truth. May the genius of those hours return! when all shall “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving for the faith of the gospel;” men “like-minded,” “earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints,”—the truth of Christ, “the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” And God speed the day, when, once more, the Presbyterian Church, in the “Reunion,” shall not let down her colors from the mast, nor give her ministers the right to raise some tattered remnant of her faith upon the top of some new mountain; but lifting high her symbol to the gallant, unfurling it on every temple spire and on every court, to float in every breeze, shall rally round her own time-honored, battle-worn, and broad blue banner, emblem of the faith, believed in, loved, and felt through all her blood—the ensign of her glory and her strength!

THE FINAL MINUTE OF THE PRESBYTERY.

The Committee to whom was referred the matter of preparing a minute for the adoption of the Presbytery in the case in which Rev. W. C. McCune was the defendant, have not thought it proper to make prominent in the same their individual or even collective views. They have deemed it their simple duty, by a faithful and patient analysis of the different votes, and by an earnest endeavor to recall the differing opinions expressed, to make up a judgment and finding which should fairly and fully represent the mind of the Court. With this explanation of their conception of the task assigned them, the Committee beg leave to submit the following minute, viz :

The Presbytery has given patient attention to the whole matter. The trial lasted thirteen days. Both the Committee of Prosecution and the accused had the amplest opportunity to present their testimony and to comment on the same.

No rules of procedure were adopted beyond what were necessary to the proper and full investigation of the case.

The general charge of disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church was presented in two specific charges, the first having reference to the defendant's opinions, and the second to his acts.

On both of these charges the defendant was acquitted by the decisive vote of 29 to 8, and in the judgment of this Court his character and standing as a Presbyterian minister are unimpeached. He also carries away from this painful traverse of his case our commendation of him as a faithful and self-denying minister of Jesus Christ, as well as their respect for his manly and Christian demeanor throughout the trial.

The general offense of disloyalty was regarded as not substantiated by the proof adduced under the various specifications. The reasons for this judgment of the Court in

detail are as follows, looking first to the several items of the first charge :

Although these charges were presented by common fame, in the name of the Presbytery, it was decided by a vote of 32 to 5, with one to sustain in part, that the eleventh specification, affirming the existence of such common fame, had not been proved by the evidence adduced by the Prosecuting Committee. The basis of the action was thus, after careful hearing of the evidence, invalidated in the judgment of the Presbytery itself.

The tenth specification, as to the length of time, affirming that the defendant had persisted for many years in advocating his opinions, was not sustained, by a vote of 17 to 12, with 9 in part, chiefly for the reason that the statute of limitation forbids the instituting of process in the case of any person for such protracted period, "unless it (the crime) shall have recently become flagrant."

Of the nine specifications relating to the opinions of the accused, supposed to be at variance with our doctrinal standards, six were declared by decisive majorities to be not sustained. The first specification, affirming what the defendant taught respecting the "Divine Law of Organization of the Christian Church," was not sustained, by a vote of 25 to 8, with 4 in part. The second specification, "As to the essential sinfulness of the Presbyterian and all other existing evangelical denominations, as such," was not sustained, by a vote of 25 to 4, with 8 in part. The third specification, "As to the sinfulness of framing and requiring assent to human creeds," was not sustained by a vote of 28 to 5, with 5 in part. The fourth specification, asserting that the defendant taught that Presbyterian ministers might change old views of doctrine and polity, and still remain in the Presbytery, was not sustained, by a vote of 31 to 4, with 3 in part. The fifth specification, as to the defendant's alleged opinion that Presbyterian and other evangelical ministers might belong to two different denominations at once, was not sustained, by a vote of 32 to 4, with 2 in part. The ninth specification, asserting that the defendant

taught what was heretical as to the subject of saving faith, was not sustained, by a vote of 29 to 4, with 5 in part.

In the investigation of the evidence as to these specifications, it became apparent that the opinions of the defendant had been misapprehended, and that he did not hold these doctrines, as alleged. Some of the specifications were inferential, such as the idea of a plurality of official membership, and as to the right to remain within a denomination while pursuing courses intended to subvert it. On these the Presbytery was precluded from passing condemnation by the instruction of the General Assembly, in the Craighead case, 1824. (Digest 224.) The specification in regard to saving faith was thrown aside in view of the frank disavowals of the defendant (see same case, Digest, 224), and of the confidence felt by nearly all in his personal loyalty to the doctrine of our Church, as set forth in the Confession of Faith, chapter xiv. While the proofs under these above-named specifications disclose some things in language and expression which are to be deprecated, and some things which the Presbytery does not approve, there is not to be found in them, in the judgment of the Court, any support for the charge of disloyalty.

In reference to three of the nine specifications, the large majority of the Presbytery were agreed to sustain, or to sustain in part. The vote on the sixth specification, "As to the terms of ministerial fellowship," was to sustain, 17; in part, 17, and not to sustain, 4. The seventh specification, charging a denial of "Infant Church Membership," was sustained by the following vote: to sustain, 20; in part, 10, and not to sustain, 8. The eighth specification, having reference to "the admission of unbaptized persons to church membership," was also sustained, the vote being, to sustain, 23; in part, 10, and not to sustain, 5.

The teachings of the defendant on these topics are apparently corollaries of his theory of Organic Union, or the combination of all believers in one Church, without reference to differences in doctrine, order or worship. The Presbytery does not regard this theory as either established by the Scriptures or as warranted by the doctrine of our

Confession respecting the communion of saints. (Chapter 26.)

In the judgment of the Presbytery, the defendant has been led by his theory into extreme positions on the three special topics named. And while the establishing of these three specifications is not of itself sufficient to prove the charges of disloyalty, the Presbytery in sustaining these specifications does express a decisive judgment adverse to the opinions thus maintained. We believe that it would be dangerous to recognize exceptions to the rule that persons who will not submit to so plain and Scriptural a sacrament as baptism should not be admitted into the visible Church. We believe that, whatever difficulties may arise from the ambiguity of the term "membership," as applied to infants, there is a just and precious relation or connection established by the covenant in the Christian family as a divine institution, and certified by baptism, which ought never to be ignored or lightly regarded by the ministers of our Church. We hold also to the entire Scriptural legitimacy of separate denominations, such as our own, in which peculiarities of doctrine as well as the general evangelical doctrine, and also peculiarities of order or modes of worship, may be recognized and maintained without impairing the true spiritual unity of the whole Church of Christ. We consequently regard the limitation of ministerial fellowship, so far as organization is concerned, as being entirely proper, and as being eminently desirable. The views of the defendant on these points are not such as the Presbytery can approve.

In view of the teaching of our Confession of Faith as to the Communion of Saints and the Sacraments, we regard the expression of such views by the defendant as are set forth in these three specifications as calculated to excite anxiety and distrust in the minds of Christian brethren, and as furnishing ground for earnest caution against all teaching which tends to induce conflict and division either within our own circle or in the Church at large, and for solemn counsel to wait more patiently upon the leadings of

Divine Providence as to any more visible union of the people of God.

The second charge is one of disloyalty in conduct, and is made to rest upon two specifications, which may be briefly summarized as (1) confederating with others in advocating and promoting "the new anti-denominational association of Independent 'Union Christian Churches of America,'" and (2) actively co-operating in organizing the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church.

The Presbytery, by a vote of 25 to 6, with 7 in part, did not sustain the first specification. The court, as is thus manifest, failed to see any adequate proof of unfaithfulness to his own Church in the labors and fellowship of the defendant, with various other parties, in publishing papers, holding conventions, etc., in the interest of Christian union. The question whether such affiliations and co-operations were wise is very different from the question whether engaging in them is evidence of a spirit of disloyalty. Even though such a course be not approved, it nevertheless lies in the category of acts where individual liberty is allowed and ecclesiastical authority should not be invoked. It has not been shown that the defendant intended to break down the denomination to which he had honestly declared his allegiance; or that he had entered consciously on an enterprise the ultimate issue of which was the revolutionary subversion of all existing sects.

The second specification (relating to the course of the defendant in connection with the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church, his influence in its organization, and his installation as pastor of the same), received the following vote, viz.: To sustain, 7; not to sustain, 12; and to sustain in part, 18. The judgment of the Presbytery on this second point, therefore, is less decisively favorable to the defendant than in reference to the first. It is in evidence that the defendant was not the originator of this church, but, on the contrary, that such organization had been contemplated some time before he came to the field. It is clear also that the original intention was to provide for the religious wants of a growing community, where as yet no one denomination

was strong enough to maintain the ordinances of the Gospel. The enterprise had, in our judgment, no connection whatever, at least in its earlier stages, with what is called the Christian Union movement. Nor is there any clear evidence that the defendant intended to pervert or divert it into any anti-denominational use, or to make it the first step in a process of destruction of existing sects. In publishing the Basis of Fellowship, and accompanying papers, preceding the call of the Council, he did not intend to make the church responsible, nor did the church ever intend to become responsible for his peculiar opinions therein contained.

In regard to the defendant's acceptance of and entrance on the pastoral office in this church without the consent of the Presbytery, we are constrained to say that such a course can not be regarded in any other light than as an irregularity. He ought to have consulted with and obtained the consent of the Presbytery. The proper course for all members of the Presbytery who resign or accept pastoral charges, or who leave the ministry for any other profession, such as teaching or editing, or who practically devote themselves to any form of secular employment, should be obviously to obtain permission from that body to which primarily their official allegiance is due. This is a proper part of that submission to our brethren in the Lord which we have individually promised. It is an accountability to which every loyal minister will, on consideration, cheerfully submit himself, and while we regret the departure in this instance from a rule, the propriety of which is so obvious, we are obliged to temper our judgment with mercy in view of the fact that the rule has not heretofore been strictly enforced. Our own negligence so far condones the offense as to render it unjust in us to inflict censure on account of it in the case before us.

The second charge, therefore, of disloyalty in conduct, the Presbytery, in like manner as with the first, by the emphatic vote of 29 to 8, regards as not sustained; while the vote on the second specification of the same shows no disposition to approve the irregularities therein mentioned.

And, neither charge being sustained, the defendant stands acquitted at our bar, and is still commended to the churches as a brother minister of Jesus Christ, faithful and beloved.

In recording thus at length our judgment on all the points specified in the charges, the Presbytery has earnestly and honestly sought to know the truth and to do the right. And with the conviction that this, our finding, is, in every substantial particular, according to justice, both to the Church and to the defendant, we may express the hope and earnest wish that it will also be promotive of peace, and that the harmony of the Church at large may not be further disturbed by the appearance of this case in any form before the higher courts.

Respectfully submitted,

O. A. HILLS,
J. P. E. KUMLER,
J. E. WRIGHT,
FREDERICK DALLAS,
JOHN KENNETT,
Committee.

As will be seen from the above minute, the Presbytery decided,

1. That there was no proof adduced, under any or all the Specifications, to show disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church, nor contravention of ordination vows, nor any impairing of our system of doctrine, nor any war upon the Standards, nor any Common Fame.

2. That Specification X, under Charge I, was *not* sustained, whereas it was *sustained* by a vote of 21 to 17.

3. That the Statute of Limitation could be applied to bar process against a continuous offense of ten years.

4. That the proofs under the Specifications "*not sustained*" were no competent proofs at all.

5. That the Prosecution "misapprehended" the opinions of Mr. McCune.

6. That some of the Specifications were "inferential," whereas there is not one such in all of them.

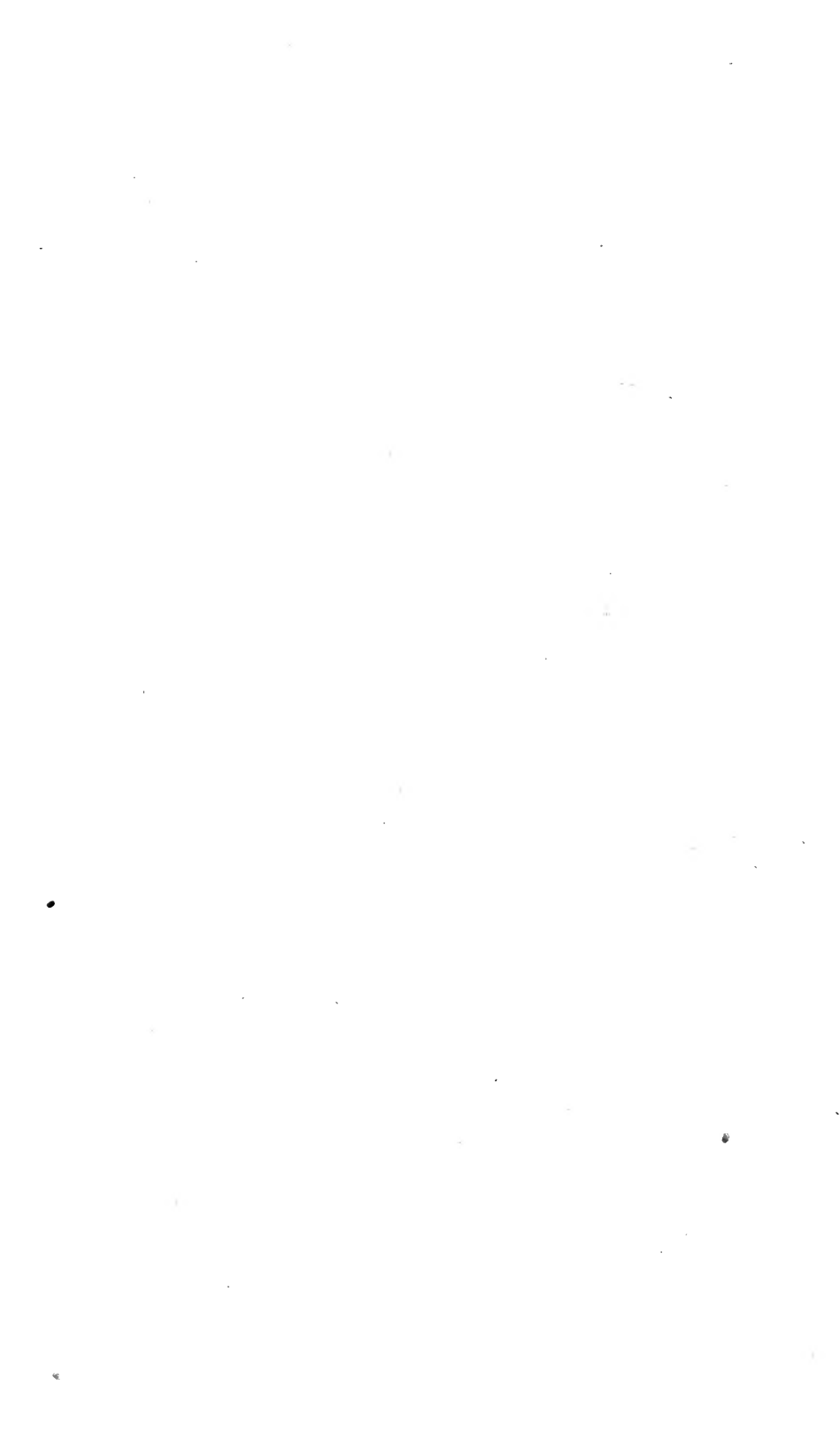
7. That the "Craighead" rule operates to "*not* sustain" the fact of proven language, whereas the Assembly used it only in mitigation of judgment upon the language proved, giving the defendant the benefit of his claimed interpretation, if deemed to be not an evasion.

8. That in all Mr. McCune has taught, there are only a few expressions to be deprecated, but nothing whatever to show any disloyalty.

9. That the Specifications which they did sustain are "corollaries" of "his theory of Organic Union," and at the same time voted that there was no proof to show that he held any such theory, and that there was no Common Fame about it. And yet again, that he did hold such a theory, while they voted down the Specifications which assert that he held it. And still, again, that his theory and corollaries merit a "decisive, adverse judgment" because they are "dangerous," and are "not such as Presbytery can approve," being "calculated to excite anxiety and distrust," tending "to induce conflict and division," and deserving "solemn counsel," and yet are no evidence of any disloyalty, and were allowed to pass without even an admonition.

10. That there is no evidence to prove that Mr. McCune was the originator of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church in the shape it took, as charged in the Specifications, and that in all his course herein he was guilty of only a little pardonable irregularity.

11. That he is a faithful, sound, loyal, unimpeached Presbyterian minister, worthy of commendation, and that the Presbytery's "own negligence" of its duty, for years past, makes it improper for it to censure anything he has said or done, and this it declares to be a finding according to justice, both to the Church and defendant, and promotive of peace.



JUDICIAL OPINION,

IN THE CASE OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

VERSUS

THE REV. W. C. McCUNE,

DELIVERED

IN THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI

ONLY IN PART, FOR WANT OF TIME,

MARCH 22, 1877.

BY THE REV. LEANDER H. LONG,

Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Lebanon, Ohio.

CINCINNATI:

PRINTED BY THE GAZETTE COMPANY.

1877.

JUDICIAL OPINION.

May it please the Moderator and Members of the Court:

The Committee of Prosecution, and the defendant, will excuse me in not wasting time in the way of indulging in complimentary expressions toward them, for their deportment during the progress of this trial, as it is our desire, to get at the case at once. In my sympathies, if I have any, one way or the other, I might be presumed to be with the defendant, as he and I were born, baptized, trained, educated, licensed, and ordained in the good old psalm-singing, close communion Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. By her, our mother, we were, when young, nourished on the sincere milk of the Word, and as we grew in stature, we were given the strong meat of her faith, and her order, so that I would have supposed that the defendant, from the training he received in the old church, would have been of full age, and by reason of use would have had his senses exercised, at the time he changed his ecclesiastical connection and became a minister in the church, which now complains of him, to have discerned, that the doctrines, principles and views, advocated by him, as he says, for the last twenty years, are at war with her standards, and if generally accepted, would totally subvert her constitution, and destroy her very existence as a Presbyterian denomination.

Mr. Moderator and brethren of the court, there are three elements in this case, and only three: the law, under which the defendant is being tried, the charge, upon which he is being tried, and the proof, upon which the charges, and specifications are to be sustained; and it is a mere waste of time, a useless expenditure of brain power, to look at anything beyond these elements of the case, in the trial of the case, and our solemn obligation, as an ecclesiastical court, limits us to a fair and impartial consideration of the law, the charge, and the proof—these, and nothing more.

The law to which the defendant is amenable, and under which he is now being tried, what is it? It seems to me that there has been on

this branch of the case some confusion of tongues, and it may be, that my tongue may only add to the bable. We will endeavor, however, to find out just what the law is, so that in the trial we may do justice to the complainant, the Presbyterian Church, and no injustice to the defendant. The law under which the defendant is being tried is not the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, for he is not charged with disloyalty to these. It is not the law as set forth in the basis agreed upon by the Evangelical Alliance, for he is not charged with not being true to this basis of evangelical truth. It is not the law as embodied in what is called the Auburn declaration, for he is not charged with not being in accord with this deliverance. It is not the law as found in anything that a Dr. Hodge, or Knox, or Crosby, or Thomas, or Skinner, may have said, or written on the subject of Christian Union, Organic Union, or any other kind of union, for he is not charged with not being in harmony with these distinguished divines. It is not the law, which some members of the court claim, has been given by Dr. Hodge, who is represented in defining the system of doctrine contained in our standards, as cutting in two that system, presenting the one part as being essential, and the other not essential to the system, for he is not charged with not being in accord with this mutilated system, that is claimed to be the work of the great Princeton Professor as to what the system of doctrine is, that is received and adopted, when the hands of the Presbytery are laid upon our heads. The defendant is not being tried under any of these laws, but under the law, to wit: the system of doctrine and polity taught in the Holy Scriptures, and contained in the confession of faith of the Presbyterian Church. *This* is the law, to which he as a Presbyterian minister is amenable for having received and adopted it sincerely, which he says he has, and no one questions it, he is now under charge of not being true to the Presbyterian Church, in that he is not true in his teaching and practice to the faith and polity of the Presbyterian Church, contained in her confession of faith, and upon this charge the trial is proceeding; but it seems to me that this is not clearly apprehended by some members of the court; else we had had less oratorical girations round and about the case, being careful not to come in actual collision with the case, at any time.

But there is some trouble as to what the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, and contained in the confession of faith of the Presbyterian Church, is. Here again, there seems to be a confusion of tongues, when there is no necessity for it. In listening to some of my brother members of the court, it seemed to me that the system of doctrine, in their judgment, is a kind of system within a system, a

wheel within a wheel, a shell and a kernal within, and to get at the exact thing, the system to be received and adopted, we must take off the outer system and receive the inner system, remove the outer wheel and adopt the inner wheel, break the shell and find in the kernal within, the faith and polity of the Presbyterian Church. What brilliant nonsense! Here we might inquire as did one of old, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge."

"System of doctrine," what does this mean? It means that the system, is a system, not of figures, or fancies, or follies, but of doctrines. The doctrines, then, of the system is the system itself, and to know what these doctrines are we go to the system that contains and enumerates them, and here we find enumerated thirty-three distinct and well defined doctrines, and these thirty-three doctrines make up "this system of doctrine," that characterizes and distinguishes the Presbyterian body, from every other ecclesiastical organization under the sun. Now, when we receive and adopt the "system of doctrine," what do we receive and adopt? why the thirty-three doctrines contained in, and which make up this system, and from which, if you should strike out a single one of the thirty-three, it would not then be the system of doctrine, which has been received and adopted from the beginning, by every minister in the Presbyterian Church. It must not be forgotten, that the "system of doctrine" in question, with its thirty-three specific chapters, is the "system of doctrine" of the Presbyterian Church, and that the whole thirty-three are essential, not to salvation, for all are not, but are essential to the Presbyterian system of doctrine, which the Presbyterian Church believes is taught in the Holy Scriptures.

Dr. Hodge has been appealed to, to settle this question, as to what the "system of doctrine" is, that is received and adopted, by the party upon whose head, the hands of the Presbytery are laid in his ordination. Just as if Dr. Hodge had taught, or could teach, that some other "system of doctrine," other than the thirty-three doctrines contained in the confession of faith, is received and adopted upon induction into the ministerial office in the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Hodge has told us just what the system of doctrine is, that it embraces just the thirty-three chapters contained in the confession, no more and no less, and then he tells us just what he ought to tell us, and what every one ought to know, without being told by Dr. Hodge or any other Gamaliel, that some twenty of these doctrines of the system are peculiar and controverted, while the remainder are not peculiar and not controverted, and from this distinction which the Dr. draws between the peculiar and the non-peculiar, the controverted and the non-contro-

verted doctrines of the system, some members of the court, and some of these, the former students of the old Princetonian Professor have drawn, without any warrant, as we think, the conclusion, that his distinction of peculiar and non-peculiar, controverted and non-controverted, is a distinction of what is essential to the system and what is not, that some twenty of its doctrines are essential, and that the remainder are not, and therefore, in receiving and adopting the system, we receive and adopt what is essential to the system, and assume no obligation to what is non-essential to the system. As to this, all we have to say, is, that those brethren of the court who have made Dr. Hodge teach a something that he never did teach, had better not go to him, and say to his face, what they have said here behind his back. What? Dr. Hodge throw out of the "system of doctrine" of the Presbyterian Church, as not being essential to the system, some thirteen doctrines, among which are the doctrines of worship, the Sabbath, oaths and vows, the church, communion of saints, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment—never. This will certainly be news to him, as he certainly has not done any such thing, at any time, or anywhere.

But in claiming that the system of doctrine is the same as the thirty-three chapters of doctrine contained in the confession, do we claim at the same time, that every sentence and clause is to be assented to, at ordination, when the system is received and adopted? By no means, for a sentence, or clause, or proposition, found in one or more of the thirty-three chapters of the system, may be stricken out without the slightest injury to the chapter or chapters from which they may be cast out, and when thrown out, the system with its thirty-three doctrines will remain as a system intact, and without any impairment of its integrity.

The law under which the defendant is being tried, being the system of doctrine, and the system of polity, contained in the confession of faith of the Presbyterian Church, which she believes to be taught in the Holy Scriptures, we now proceed to look at the charge, which is the second element in the case, and which is set forth in the two following declarations:

"That the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a minister of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has, for years past, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive faith and order of the Presbyterian Church, as also in opposition to the terms of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical Basis of Union adopted, unanimously, by the Presbytery of Cincinnati (O. S.), at Avondale, September 8, 1869, Mr. McCune being present

and voting for the same, and adopted by the whole Presbyterian Church (O. S. and N. S.), and in joint convention November 12, 1869, declared as of binding force, openly proclaimed and persistently advocated doctrines, principles, and views, not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but, if generally accepted, totally subversive of its constitution, and of the very existence of the Presbyterian denomination itself."

"That the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a minister of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, and for the publicly avowed purpose of carrying into practical effect the doctrines, principles and views specified under Charge I, been instrumental in advising, promoting and encouraging the new Antidenominational Association of the "Union Christian Churches of America;" and, also, the new anti-denominational organization at Linwood and Mount Lookout, founded on these doctrines, principles and views, his course herein being, if generally allowed, totally subversive of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and of its very existence as a distinctive denomination."

The charge or the offense always relates to the law, and were not the system of doctrine, and the system of polity, contained in the confession of faith of the Presbyterian Church, the law to govern her ministers in what they teach, and do, then, there could be no charge against the defendant. But this being the law of the church, and published as her system of doctrine, and as her form of government, book of discipline and directory for worship, the defendant then stands charged with "disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church," and pray what does this mean? Why simply, that having upon his ordination and installation in a Presbyterian pastorate, assumed the obligation to preach the faith and practice the polity of the Presbyterian Church, as set forth in her standards, he has turned away from this faith and this polity, and advocated doctrines, principles, and views, which are claimed to be, not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but, if generally accepted, totally subversive of its constitution.

This teaching, and this practice, is called by the Committee of Prosecution, "disloyalty," and the committee has been severely criticised for thus characterizing the offense as "disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church," as the offense of the defendant, if he be guilty of any offense does not reach, as it is said, to that height of infamy which the term disloyalty conveys, and of which, if he should be convicted, he would deserve to be hung higher than Hayman. It matters little, we apprehend, what

the caption of the offense is, or what terms are employed to indicate it, if the caption, or the terms, truly express the nature of the offense. Does the term disloyalty truly do this? Let us see: disloyalty can never be predicated of any one, except that one is owing allegiance, and then it can only be charged against that one, as that one has ignored or broken his allegiance. Now, in this case, the defendant owed allegiance to the Presbyterian Church, in having received and adopted her confession of faith, and having approved of her government and discipline; and having done this, he is charged with advocating doctrines, principles, and views, at war with her standards, and tending to the destruction of her constitution, and existence as a denomination, and this the Committee of Prosecution have called "disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church;" and, now, is this a misnomer? We think not, but the very term that expresses more fully, perhaps, than any other term could possibly do, the nature of the offense, with which the defendant stands charged. Still, the committee might have said in speaking of the offense of the defendant, that he had not been true to his ministerial allegiance, or that as a minister in the Presbyterian Church he had not been, and was not now in accord with her faith and polity, which would have been saying precisely the same thing which they do say, when they express it as disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church. But why waste time in answer to a mere quibble about the term the committee have used to express the nature of the offense charged upon the defendant? Let us proceed.

Here let us inquire into the extent of the obligation assumed by the defendant, when he, by the reception and adoption of the Presbyterian standards, became a minister in the Presbyterian Church. The committee call this obligation a solemn vow, and for this they are promptly criticised, and for other things said and done by them, until sometimes we were in doubt, as to who was the culprit—the committee or the defendant. The committee, say the defenders of the defendant, should have spoken of his obligation simply as a promise, and not as a solemn vow, seeming to intimate that to violate a solemn vow, is a much greater offense than to violate a solemn promise. Well, call it what you may, a promise or a vow, a solemn promise or a solemn vow, it is, in itself, of the nature of an obligation, assumed in the sight of God and before men, and is, therefore, an intensely solemn thing, be it the one or the other—a solemn vow or a solemn promise, and when broken, is nothing more nor less than disloyalty to the person or thing to whom, or to what the allegiance was due, and, as in this case, it was due to the Presbyterian Church, the defendant having received and adopted her standards of faith and polity, he is, therefore,

in departing from this faith and this polity, if it be true that he has, properly chargeable with "disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church." But, let us leave this quibble and hair-splitting of the defense as to the nature of the obligation assumed by the defendant, and proceed, for what we want to get at just now, is, the extent of the vow or the promise, which he made when he became a minister in the Presbyterian Church.

The extent of the obligation is seen in this, that in the ordination, as well as in the pastoral installation of any one in the Presbyterian Church, affirmative answers are made to the following questions: "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" "Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States?" This obligation now relates to all that is distinctive and peculiar in the faith of the church, and in the government and discipline of the church, to all that distinguishes the Presbyterian Church from any other church, to all that is denominational in her, as well as to all that is evangelical in her. It is an obligation to honestly preach the faith, keep the order, and enforce the discipline of the Presbyterian Church. And how well the defendant may, or may not have done this, we will see, when we come to look at the proof.

Now, in answer to this, it is said by a number of the members of the court, that the obligation taken, has nothing in it, binding the individual assuming it, never to change his views; and, then, to fix and fasten this idea, our brother member of the court, Ritchey, tells us that the only two animals who are never known to change their views, are a fool and a mule. Is this so? and if so, that a man who never changes his views, is either a fool or a mule, what kind of an animal must that man be—a fool or a mule—who, having changed his views, then refuses to change his relations, so as to be in his relations consistent with his views? Will the brother answer? It has been said, too, in defense of the defendant, that the Presbyterian Church is a church of liberty; why, certainly it is. A more liberal church is nowhere to be found. She binds no man's conscience. She compels no man to come into her; and she forces no man to remain in her contrary to his will. Her invitation to those who would be ministers in her, is, if any man will, let him come and receive and adopt the standards of her faith and her order, and, as long as he remains true to these, he is at liberty to remain; but, when he fails in his fidelity to these standards, he is at liberty to go out of her, and no man will seek to compel him, to remain in her. Is not this liberty enough?

The liberty of the Presbyterian Church is the liberty of law; the liberty of her standards, and not the liberty to do whatsoever seemeth right in the eyes of any one. Not the liberty to openly and persistently advocate doctrines, principles, and views, not only at war with her standards, but, if generally accepted, would totally subvert her constitution and destroy her denominational existence. This, certainly, is not the liberty, which my brother members of the court claim may be exercised by Presbyterian ministers, for this would be nothing more, nor less than the commission of denominational suicide, and this, is not what the Presbyterian Church is prepared to do just now.

Having seen what the law of the case is, to wit: The standards of the Presbyterian Church, her system of doctrine, her form of government, her book of discipline, her directory for worship, all contained, or set forth in her confession of faith, and having seen what the charge in the case is, to wit: "Disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church," in this, that the defendant had been for many years past, openly and persistently, advocating doctrines, principles, and views, not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but, if generally accepted, would totally subvert her constitution and destroy her existence as a denomination; we will now proceed to examine the proof in the case, in its application under the law to this charge.

The charge is presented under two forms, so as to make two charges, the one relating to the faith of the church, and the other to the polity of the church, and these charges are exhibited under thirteen specifications, eleven pertaining to the first charge, and two pertaining to the second charge, and each and every specification is accompanied with the proof which is relied upon to sustain them, and the charges, and unless there is something in the proof, adduced by the defendant, to nullify the proof adduced by the Committee of Prosecution, every specification under both charges must certainly be maintained.

To understand the proof in its application to the truth of the specifications under the charges against the defendant, we must, if we can, clearly understand just what the defendant has taught, and has done, being at the same time a minister in our Presbyterian denomination. What he has taught, and done, has been called a scheme, a system, a theory; and now, what is this, his scheme, system or theory?

It is, so far as we can gather it from his teaching and practice, that a denomination, so far as it is evangelical in its faith and in its polity, is authorized, is scriptural, and has a right to exist, but in so far as it is denominational, it is unauthorized, wholly unscriptural, and has no right to exist. His theory is, that there may not be, in or about a

Christian church, anything of the nature of denominational law, or denominational enactments, or if there be, this law, or these enactments, while they may be preached, must not be in any case enforced. If this be his scheme or theory, and we think it is, and if we have not misrepresented the defendant in stating his scheme, or theory, and we think we have not, then his scheme, or theory, obliges him to teach, and to do, the very things which he is charged, with teaching and doing in the specifications, under the charges against him. And to be consistent with his scheme, or theory, is to be utterly inconsistent with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, heretofore received and adopted by him.

Let us now go to the proof, accompany each specification, carefully examine it, and see whether what is cited against the defendant in the specifications, as being taught and done by him, and as being contrary to the faith and polity of the Presbyterian Church, is sustained by the proof.

The first specification is, "As to the Divine Law of Organization for the Christian Church, in this, that the Divine Law of Organization for the Christian Church; in all time, is found in Romans xv. 7, and not only forbids the existence of different evangelical denominations, as such, and any exclusion of Christian members or ministers in one denomination from full fellowship in another, but requires oneness of visible external organization, and immediate preparation for the reorganization of the Presbyterian and whole Christian Church on a New Testament basis; moreover, according to this law, the church may cut off from its communion no one who is not, first of all, assumed, or proved, to be unregenerate."

And now, what is the proof that he has taught the above? The proof is this, for the defendant says, "we are convinced that we find the law requiring visible union in Romans xv. 7, as well as in other scriptures," "that the New Testament forbids denominational divisions and requires visible union," and this is the same as organic oneness, "that God calls upon all Christ's disciples to make immediate preparation for a united New Testament organization of the church in every place," and "that were it not for sectarian managers, and placemen, Christian hearts, now separated by mere human sectarian walls, would gladly unite in visible union," or in organic oneness. Is this, the faith as taught by the defendant, the faith of the Presbyterian Church? Is this the gospel which the Presbytery, when it laid its hands upon his head, in his ordination, authorized and directed him to preach? Is this, to wit, organic oneness, found anywhere in the system of doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, and received and adopted by the defendant, upon his installation into a Presbyterian pastorate?

That such teaching is at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church we shall not stop to show, for we are speaking to those who are familiar with the standards, and who must therefore know that it is not, and the court will therefore vote, and certainly can not vote otherwise, than to sustain the first specification.

The second specification is, "*As to the essential sinfulness of the Presbyterian and all other existing evangelical denominations as such.*"—In this, that the Presbyterian and all other evangelical denominations, as such, *i. e.*, in their peculiar character as distinct organizations, apart from their common Christianity, and framed by denominational law to maintain and enforce their peculiar and distinctive creed as to doctrine and polity, are essentially sinful, are not churches, and have no scriptural right to exist.

The proof under, and intended to sustain this second specification, what is it? The defendant says that "denominational divisions in the church are wholly destitute of scriptural authority." "We have a clear, profound conviction that denominational divisions are unscriptural." "I do not believe that the Presbyterian Churches are Christian Union organizations, I believe they ought to be." "I condemn sectarianism as essentially sinful," and what the defendant means here by sectarianism is denominational law, or enactment, and its enforcement, and this is essentially sinful. It is enough just here simply to inquire whether anything of this kind is found anywhere in the standards of the Presbyterian Church, received and adopted by the defendant. If it is, then we have sadly misapprehended, what is contained in the standards of our church. The issue is not what the standards ought to be, not what they ought to contain, but is organic oneness a doctrine in our system of doctrine, and if not, and as it is not, then the doctrine, the principle, the view of organic oneness as taught by the defendant, under this second specification, is not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but if generally accepted would totally subvert her presbyterial or constitutional existence, and the court will therefore, beyond the possibility of a question, sustain this second specification; and so let us pass to the third.

The third specification, is, "*As to the sinfulness of Framing and Requiring Assent to Human Creeds.*"—In this, that everything distinctive in creeds should be given up, or struck out, and no human inference or deduction from divine truth be allowed; that the Bible itself is an all-sufficient and the only proper creed for all time; that the construction of an extended creed, beyond the Scripture statement of a *few* leading doctrines, the most, otherwise discordant, will accept, is a usurpation of the divine prerogative, and the enforcement of distinctive tenets upon the official ministry, an oppression of the conscience."

The defendant is not opposed to a creed. It is only the length of the creed that he strikes at. It is what it should contain that he contends for. He is as much in favor of a creed as any of us, but our creed—to wit: the creed of the Presbyterian Church—is not his creed. He takes the standards of the Presbyterian Church, the system of doctrine, the form of government, the book of discipline, the directory for worship, all of which make up her creed, and strikes out of it all human inferences or deductions from divine truth, strikes out of it all Scripture statements, except a few leading doctrines; and, having done this, then, pray tell me, what is left of our denominational existence. Here let me say, that among the members of this court we seem to hear an uncertain sound on the subject of creeds; a confounding of the Bible with a creed, and a creed with the Bible. The Bible is not a creed, nor is a creed the Bible. What, then, is the Bible, and what is a creed? The Bible is God's Word, and is contained in the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, just as our system of doctrine is contained in the thirty-three chapters of our confession of faith, and this Bible, God, by inspiration, gave to all men, to be the infallible rule of their faith and life. Now, a creed is just our understanding of what the Bible teaches on any given subject, and this understanding is expressed in human language; and, therefore, a creed is a human thing, in contradistinction to God's Word, or the Bible, which is a divine thing. The creed, therefore, of the Presbyterian Church is not the Bible, nor is the Bible the creed of the Presbyterian Church, nor of any other church on earth. If, then, the Bible be not our creed, nor our creed the Bible, what is the latter in contradistinction to the former? The former remains to us as a church, and to all churches as well as to all individuals, the infallible rule of faith and practice; while the latter, our creed, remains to the Presbyterian Church as her understanding of what the Bible teaches concerning *doctrine, government, discipline and worship* in the house and family of God. Were it a new, or original question, as to how long or how short our creed ought to be, what it ought, or ought not to contain, as compared with what it now embodies, we might change and modify it, might strike out many things now in it, and put many things in it that are not now in it. But, this is not a question in this trial, and we may, therefore, not dwell upon it. The question of the trial is, under this third specification, has the defendant, on the subject of creeds, taught a doctrine, advocated a principle, maintained a view, which, if generally accepted, would destroy our denominational life? What has he taught on the subject of creeds which is at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church? His teaching is, "that a sec-

tarian creed" (that is, a denominational creed) "is always mischievous and sinful;" that "every matter in our creed, which our fellow Christians of other churches can not see to be law in Scripture, should be stricken out;" that "the churches of Christ ought to have no authorized creed or discipline but the Holy Scriptures." We need quote the proof no further, for this is enough; and with this proof under the third specification, standing as it does unimpeached and unimpaired, the court must, of necessity, and will sustain the specification.

The fourth specification is, "*As to Ordination Vows.*—In this, that Presbyterian ministers, under the obligation of solemn ordination vows, may change the old views of doctrine and polity they approved and pledged themselves to maintain at the time of their ordination, and preach, publish, and advocate their new views; claiming, meanwhile, that those who object to this should themselves leave the Presbytery, while the advocates of the new views may remain in the body for the sake of good standing, without renouncing their departures from the standards."

This specification being so thoroughly dwelt upon at length, and in detail by Bro. Ledyard, one of the Committee of Prosecution, we shall not take up your time in again calling attention to it, except to say, that it far surpasses our comprehension, and, I think, also the comprehension of the court, how a Presbyterian minister can array himself against everything that is denominational in the body of which he is a minister, and put into practical effect his opposition to its denominationalism, as the defendant has done at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, and then insist in remaining in the body, as an indorsement of his ministerial standing. What does he say? "I have publicly advocated, and propose to advocate" what? that denominational enactments "are the apples of discord, the wedges of division in the Christian church," and while thus advocating, he insists in remaining, in that church, in which these apples and these wedges, are doing nothing but producing discord and divisions. His declaration of remainment is, "I wish my name to remain on the roll of the Presbytery as an endorsement of my standing as a Christian minister;" and, again, "It is useless to make any intimations to me on this subject, as I propose that my name shall stand on the roll of Presbytery as long as I remain in Cincinnati or vicinity." Instead of this claim to remain, this cry, that his name shall stand on the roll of the Presbytery, it seems to me that another, and a different cry should come from the defendant, to wit: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" the denominationalism of Presbyterianism, this unauthorized and "unscriptural thing," "this hurtful excrescence," this "that is essentially

sinful," these "apples of discord," these "wedges of division." But, enough, the court, in view of the proof under this specification, must and will sustain the specification, and cannot, we think, do otherwise.

The fifth specification is, "*As to Plurality of Official Membership.*—In this, that Presbyterian, and other evangelical ministers, may belong, at the same time, to two different ecclesiastical denominations, antagonistic in their principles, and subscribe allegiance to both."

This would seem to be a strange doctrine. What? Serve two masters. The thing can't be done, for our Great Master has said, "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other," and we will not add, "ye cannot serve God and mammon," but will add, and say to the defendant, ye cannot serve the Linwood and Mt. Look-out Church, which is one of the "Union Christian Churches of America," and at the same time the Presbyterian Church in these United States. Here are two jurisdictions, antagonistic in their faith, and in their polity; here are two masters, and as both cannot be served at the same time, the attempt, if it be made, must result in hating the one, and loving the other, or in holding to the one, and despising the other. Has the "Union Christian Churches of America" no basis, or bond of fellowship? If not, then it has no jurisdictional existence; but if it has a bond of union, a basis of fellowship, regulations of expediency, then it has a jurisdictional existence; and as the defendant is by his own confession connected with the "Union Christian Churches of America," he is therefore under the jurisdiction of the "Union Christian Churches of America," whatever this jurisdiction may be. Now, here is one ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the defendant having signed the bond, or basis of fellowship of the "Union Christian Churches of America," was thereby enrolled a minister in the church, known as the "Union Christian Church of America," and this enrollment was in view of the invitation which the "Christian Union Convention," which met at Suffolk, Virginia, on the first Wednesday of May, 1875, at ten o'clock A. M., gave, to wit: "All ministers and churches adopting this basis will be recognized and enrolled as Union Christian ministers and churches to be known as the 'Union Christian Churches of America.'" The other jurisdiction, is the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in these United States, and the defendant, by subscription of its standards, is under this jurisdiction, amenable to its faith and its order, as his name now stands enrolled on the roll of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, one of the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in these United States. The only proof that need be referred to, as establishing the truth of this specification, that a Presbyterian minister may belong at the same

time to two different ecclesiastical jurisdictions, antagonistic in their principles, and subscribe allegiance to both, is found in the "Christian Unity" of August 1st, 1875, page 5, a paper co-editorially published by the defendant, in which it is said, "if the union movement is to prove a success we must organize, band ourselves together as ministers and churches, advocating with freedom and earnestness our peculiar principles." This is enough, the court certainly can and will sustain this specification, and therefore we will hasten on.

The sixth specification is, "*As to the Terms of Ministerial Fellowship.*—In this, that no Presbytery has a right by any terms of fellowship to exclude from its ecclesiastical brotherhood, or constituent official membership, any evangelical minister of any other evangelical denomination, but that such minister is, *ipso facto*, entitled to a pastorate in any Presbyterian Church, to a seat in any Presbytery in Christendom, to the exercise of jurisdiction and control in our highest courts, eligible to the chair of instruction in Presbyterian colleges and seminaries, and should be protected in the right of private judgment and free speech."

The seventh specification is, "*As to the Constituent Membership of the New Testament Church.*—In this, that the doctrine of infant church-membership, grounded in the covenant of God with believers, in behalf of their offspring, is to be repudiated as a High-church theory, and that the true definition of the New Testament church is, that it consists of Christians only, believers only—not their children—an assembly or company of the regenerate alone."

The eighth specification is, "*As to the Admission of Unbaptized Persons to Church Membership.*—In this, that unbaptised persons who deny, or scruple to admit, the necessary and perpetual obligation of water baptism, as instituted by Christ, and the ordinance of baptism itself as a covenant sign and seal, and initiatory rite of entrance for believing adults into the Christian church, may, notwithstanding, be admitted to church membership; and that the one condition and requirement for entrance into the visible church is credible evidence of faith in Christ."

From the opinions of members of the court already given, it is evident that the above specifications will all be sustained, and as I concur with them in sustaining these specifications, I will not stop to dwell upon them, but will proceed.

The ninth specification is, "*As to saving faith in Christ and in the Word of God.*—In this, that a person may have true and saving faith in Christ, and in God's Word, without believing either that Christ was true man, or that the Word of God is truly infallible, and that true and saving faith, *ipso facto*, excludes all fatal heresy."

This specification might be, I think, submitted without argument, for certainly it will be sustained. Can any member of the court say that the defendant, or any other Presbyterian minister, may preach on the subject of saving faith, that which is cited in this specification, and which is so clearly another gospel, and then claim, and have it claimed for him, as it has been here, that he is not disloyal to the Presbyterian Church? Will any member of this court, so far forget the faith of his church, as to say that the defendant, or any other Presbyterian minister, may admit into the Presbyterian Church, any one not believing in the infallibility of the Bible, or any one not believing in the proper humanity of Christ, that he was "Immanuel," "God with us," "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," and then claim, and have it claimed for him, as it has been here, that he is not untrue to the standards of our faith? As to this specification, the proof is, in the language of the defendant, "We believe that a man may be a Christian, and not believe in the infallibility of the Bible, although, 'almost,' all Christians do believe the Bible to be infallible." Again, "We believe that a man may be a Christian, and not believe in the proper humanity of Christ, although, 'almost,' all Christians do believe that Jesus was true man, as well as God." Again, "Saving faith in Christ necessarily includes all other saving graces, and thereby excludes all fatal heresy;" and, again, "Regenerate souls are all orthodox." What does the defendant mean in all this? He means, we presume, by the declaration that "regenerate souls are all orthodox," the same that he means by the declaration, that "saving faith excludes all fatal heresy," and if he means by this, what the Apostle Paul means, when he says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," then he would be in accord with the faith of the Presbyterian Church. But what does the defendant mean by these declarations, connected with the declarations that a man may deny the "infallibility of the Bible," and the "proper humanity of Christ," and yet be a Christian. If he mean anything, it must be, that to deny the infallibility of the Bible is not a fatal heresy, nor is it a fatal heresy to deny the proper humanity of Christ, and that as neither of these denials is a false heresy, a man therefore may deny both and yet be a Christian. But the question here, what is it? It is not, that the man is regenerate, and therefore must be orthodox, or that he has saving faith in Christ, and he is therefore safe from all fatal heresy, but is this, whether a man claiming or professing to have saving faith in Christ, and at the same time denying the infallibility of the Bible and the proper humanity of Christ, ought to be received into the Presbyterian Church?

and now to this question, the standards of the Presbyterian Church emphatically say, no; and the defendant in receiving the deniers of the "infallibility of the Bible," and "proper humanity of Christ," into the Presbyterian Church, would be at war with her standards, however consistent it might be with the standards of the Linwood and Mt. Lookout Church to do so. The ninth specification, in view of the proof, the court will without any hesitancy sustain.

The tenth specification is, *As to Persistence in Advocacy of the foregoing Doctrines, Principles, and Views.*—In this, that for many years last past, the Rev. W. C. McCune, being a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has regularly persisted, as lecturer, editor and pastor, to openly proclaim, publish and advocate, the aforesaid Christian Union doctrines, principles and views; that since the appointment of the Presbytery's Committee of Investigation, he has continued to do the same in the public secular press, May 9, 1876, before the Presbytery's Investigating Committee, June 26, 1876, and openly in Presbytery itself, October 4, 1876, and again in the secular press, October 17, 1876, subsequent to the appointment of the Prosecuting Committee; having announced his purpose to pursue in future, as in the past, the advocacy of the same principles of Christian Union.

The question here is the length of time the defendant has been advocating the doctrines, principles and views, that are claimed to be at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, and if generally accepted, would subvert her constitution and destroy her existence as a denomination. Under this, as under all the other specifications, the defendant himself furnishes all the proof. He says: "I have been perfectly candid and outspoken on this subject for many years," and this subject he states to be as follows: "I do not believe the Presbyterian churches are Christian Union churches; I believe they ought to be;" and again, "I am advocating no sentiments now that I have not openly proclaimed for ten years;" and again, "I have publicly advocated, and propose to advocate, the following principles on the subject of Christian Union;" and these principles which he has advocated, and proposes still to advocate, are such as necessarily leads the defendant in their advocacy, to denounce all denominational laws and enactments of the Presbyterian Church, as "unauthorized," "wholly unscriptural," a "hurtful excrescence," "essentially sinful," "apples of discord," and "wedges of division."

In the face of the proof, that the defendant has, as he says, for the last ten years been persistent and faithful in advocating his views, and proposes still to advocate them, the statute of limitation has been pleaded in his behalf; and, therefore, as the statute has ceased to run,

he should go acquitted. The offense, it is claimed, if committed at all, was committed more than a year, prior to the date of the commencement of this judicial process. If this were true, then the statute of limitation would avail, and no one more readily than myself, would vote for the acquittal of the defendant. But the fact is, the offense is an offense, with a continuendo. It has been from the beginning, ten years ago, a continuous thing, a patient, persevering matter with the defendant, committed over and over again, through all these years, down to the date of the institution of this judicial process, and committed again and again, even after the process began, down to and during the progress of the trial, in giving expression to the same doctrines and principles and views, for which he is now under trial. It is therefore utterly useless, for any one to plead in behalf of the defendant the statute of limitation, and on this ground ask for his acquittal. And it seems to me, perhaps it may be a misapprehension of mine, that members of the court, feeling themselves utterly unable to meet and dispose of the evidence against the defendant, must needs have something to say in his defense, and so they resort to, and plead in his behalf, the statute of limitation. But this plea will avail nothing, the specification will be sustained.

The eleventh specification is, "*As to the Common Fame in reference to the Whole Charge.*—In this, that in addition to evidence involved in the foregoing proofs, attached to the specifications, many newspapers have published articles concerning it, and the Presbytery of Cincinnati appointed a Committee of Investigation, April 13, 1876, 'to confer with Mr. McCune and examine into certain rumors touching his loyalty to the Presbyterian Church, and report to the Presbytery.' Said Committee having so conferred and examined, and so reported at Mt. Auburn, September 13, 1876."

This specification is not, that the defendant is guilty of common fame, but relates to the ground of his prosecution. It relates to the accuser in the case, and if it can be shown, that there was no common fame existing at the time these judicial proceedings were commenced, charging the defendant, as he now stands charged, then we must all, of necessity, vote not to sustain this specification, and this will be the end of the whole case. Members of the court have claimed in behalf of the defendant, that there was no common fame to justify this prosecution, at least no such common fame as the Book of Discipline contemplates, and which is described to be, a "rumor specifying some particular sin or sins, being general or widely spread, not transient but permanent, rather gaining strength than declining, and must be accompanied with strong presumption of truth." Let us now see, whether the

fame, which is the accuser in this case, was such a rumor as the book contemplates, and upon which it was right, and proper to commence a judicial proceeding against the defendant. A rumor, like everything else, must have a beginning, and it becomes a common rumor, or a common fame, just as it passes from mouth to mouth, whether it be the mouth of the press, or the mouth of an individual, and, as it continues to pass from lip to lip, until it is known to more than a few, it then begins to be general, and if it is not stopped in its passage, it soon becomes widely spread, and therefore a common fame. Now, what is the fact as to the fame in the case of the defendant, being a common fame. It had a beginning, and it specified a particular offense, for the rumor was that the defendant was advocating certain doctrines, principles and views, at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, calculated to subvert her constitution and destroy her denominational existence. This rumor passed from mouth to mouth, until it was known to more than a few. The subject, to wit: the defendant, not being true to the faith and order of his church was discussed in many newspapers circulating throughout, the church, and the country, until the rumor of his disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church became general, and widely spread, extending beyond not only the limits of his Presbytery, but the boundaries of his Synod, and into the regions far beyond. The rumor was not transient, appearing for a day and then passing away, but permanent and gaining in strength, as the defendant continued to advocate, without cessation, his Organic Union doctrines, principles and views, which were the subject of the rumor. It was accompanied, too, with strong presumption of truth, so much so, as to necessitate the Presbytery at its meeting in Glendale, April 13, 1876, to raise a committee under the following preamble and resolution of instruction :

“WHEREAS, for *some time past*, there have been *current rumors* in regard to the views and course of Rev. W. C. McCune, a member of this Presbytery, involving the question of his *loyalty* to the order of the Presbyterian Church, and whereas, there seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to the subject ;

“Therefore, *Resolved*, that a Committee of three ministers and two ruling elders be appointed to have a full conference with Mr. McCune, and to inquire into all the facts bearing on the case and report to Presbytery at the next stated meeting.”

This committee reported, and concerning the facts about which they were to inquire, their report shows that there were in existence current rumors in regard to the views and course of the defendant, involving the question of his loyalty to the Presbyterian Church. These current

rumors were, as reported by the committee, that the defendant denied the right of the Presbyterian Church to maintain and enforce her standards so far as they were denominational; that he was not true to our standards on the subject of ministerial fellowship, as well as on the subject, as to the grounds of membership in the church—the defendant's "scheme," as the committee call it, admits into the church those who deny the outward rights of baptism and the Lord's Supper; that he was not true to our standards, as to the relation, to the church, of the baptized children of believing parents; and then the committee conclude and say, that "any system of Christian Union which contravenes these principles, and ignores the command of Christ, 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them,' etc., if held and practiced by our office bearers, must be damaging to the purity and unity of the church." Now, in view of this report, and in view of all that had appeared in the press, on the subject of the defendant's views in relation to the organic oneness of the church, who can consistently say, that there were no current rumors, no common fame as to the defendant's loyalty to the Presbyterian Church. The rumor in this case, if it had been manufactured to order, and with the view of meeting the requirements of the book, could not possibly have met these requirements, more fully than did the rumor in the case of the defendant, which did specify a particular offense, was general or widely spread, was not transient but permanent, and rather gaining strength than declining, and was accompanied with strong presumption of truth, the very things that render an offense, proper for the cognizance of a judicatory. It was therefore a poor defense, a weak defense, a last resort, a catching at a straw, for members of the court, and notably Dr. Morris, to claim, and to argue, that there was no common fame, such as the Book contemplates for this judicial process against the defendant, and that, therefore, he must go acquitted.

Let us now proceed to the second charge and specifications.

Having concluded what we have to say on the first charge and specifications, we come now to the second charge, and the specifications under it.

The offense here is, disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church, and relates to the order or polity of the church, as the first relates to the faith of the church. The charge is, that the defendant, "being a minister in the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, has, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, and for the publicly avowed purpose of carrying into practical effect the doctrines, principles and views specified

under Charge I, been instrumental in advising, promoting and encouraging the new Anti-denominational Association of the 'Union Christian Churches of America;' and, also, the new anti-denominational organization at Linwood and Mount Lookout, founded on these doctrines, principles and views, his course herein being, if generally allowed, totally subversive of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and of its very existence as a distinctive denomination."

This charge is developed in two specifications, with the proofs accompanying each specification, in view of which, the specifications are expected to be sustained.

The first specification is, that the defendant, "during certain years last past, has advocated and promoted the new Anti-denominational Association of independent "Union Christian Churches of America," by editing the "Christian Unity," in Cincinnati, by lecturing at large upon the subject of Organic Union, by issuing an "Address to all the Christian ministers and churches in North America, with a basis of union," by joining himself to this association, calling upon all in sympathy with the new movement to adopt the basis, enroll themselves in the new association, send delegates to attend its annual conventions, and to advocate the peculiar principles of Organic Union.

Did the defendant do all the things cited in this specification? And, if so, was it in contravention of his obligation to the Presbyterian Church which he took upon himself, when he answered, affirmatively, the following question, propounded to him by the Presbytery at his ordination, and again at his installation in a Presbyterian pastorate? "Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States?" And was it for the publicly avowed purpose of carrying into practical effect his peculiar views on the subject of the organic oneness of all Christian churches? And, in doing all these things, was he instrumental in creating the new Anti-denominational Association of the "Union Christian Churches of America," in that he advised, promoted and encouraged the same? The proof must determine the answer to all these questions; and now let us turn to the proof, and hear what answers, yes or no, it has to make. As to his editing the paper called the "Christian Unity," and in this way advocating and promoting the new Anti-denominational Association of Independent "Union Christian Churches of America," and as to his lecturing, and in this way advocating and promoting the Anti-denominational "Union Christian Churches of America," the proof is, and we give it in the language of the defendant himself. He says: "The editor of this paper has, for eighteen or twenty years, proposed, that when it should seeme vident that a fit time had come,

he would devote himself to the advocacy of the visible unity of all true Christians. And he has always supposed that the most efficient instrumentality for furthering Christian Union were public oral addresses and the press. And when he began, on the eighth of November (1873) to issue this paper, he at the same time began to deliver lectures on the subject of Christian Unity. And now, by request, he will give a brief account of this part of his work. He has spoken at Butler and Boston and Newport, Kentucky; and in Goshen and South Salem, and at Parrot's School House and Linden, and in Springfield and Urbana, at Buck Creek Church, and at New Richmond and Hillsboro, in Ohio; and on last Saturday evening he spoke at Madison, near Middletown; on Sabbath morning in the Presbyterian Church in Middletown, of which Rev. J. Closkey is pastor; on Sabbath afternoon in a school-house, near the village of Astoria; on Sabbath evening in Jacksonburg, in the church of which Rev. J. Emerick is pastor; and on Monday evening in the Baptist Church in Middletown, of which Rev. Mr. Booth is pastor. In all, he has spoken in eighteen different places." This is the proof, and if any proof ever clearly sustained any thing, this proof, without the shadow of a doubt, clearly sustains the specification that the defendant, by editing the "Christian Unity," in Cincinnati, and by lecturing at large upon the subject of Organic Union, did advocate and promote the new Anti-denominational Association of Independent "Union Christian Churches of America." And that this was in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, we will not stop to argue, as that would imply, that the intelligence of the court is not such, as to clearly see it, without argument, and we will, therefore, not insult the intelligence of the court in any argument, that what the specification specifies the defendant to have done in this matter, was, as stated in the charge, in contravention of his vows of loyalty to the distinctive government, and discipline of the Presbyterian Church. The specification cites further, that the defendant advocated and promoted the new Anti-denominational Association of Independent "Union Christian Churches of America," by issuing an "Address to all the Christian ministers and churches in North America, with a basis of union," by joining himself to this association, calling upon all in sympathy with the new movement to accept the basis, enroll themselves in the new association, send delegates to attend its annual conventions, and to advocate the peculiar principles of Organic Union. Did the defendant do what he is here declared to have done? Did he issue an address to all the Christian ministers and churches in North America, with a basis of union? Did he join

himself to the new Anti-denominational Association of Independent "Union Christian Churches of North America?" Did he, in the address that was issued, call upon all in sympathy with the new movement to adopt the basis, enroll themselves in the new association, send delegates to attend its annual conventions, and to advocate the peculiar principles of Organic Union? Did the defendant do all this? Let the proof speak. Let the testimony be heard. What we now read is from the address, styled: "Address to all Christian ministers and churches in North America, with a basis of union;" signed by the defendant and others. "In this basis, which we submit to your serious and prayerful attention, we have suggested what we believe must be the initial step, namely, to receive every Christian into our fellowship, and every Christian minister who teaches the common faith of the gospel." "Brethren, this is an attempt to induce Christians to unite on the basis of their agreements." "We ask every minister who approves it, to say so, and to accept a cordial invitation to attend the Christian Union Convention, which is to meet at Suffolk, Virginia, on the first Wednesday of May, 1875, at 10 o'clock A. M." "All Christian ministers and churches adopting this basis, and enrolled as Union Christian ministers and churches, to be known as the 'Union Christian Churches of America.'" "As earnest, practical men, we propose to obey the Christian Union precepts of the New Testament, by organizing an actual visible oneness." "If the union movement is to prove a success, we must organize, band ourselves together as ministers and churches, advocating with freedom and earnestness our peculiar principles." The above is the proof, with much more, that we might read from the great mass of testimony accompanying the specification, that the defendant did do all the things, which, in the specification, he is claimed to have done. And now, that all this done by the defendant, was in contravention of the order and polity of the Presbyterian Church, no Presbyterian, ordinarily familiar with the polity of his church, need be told. Indeed, this specification, with its proofs, as well as the entire case, might have been confidently submitted without argument, and without even a doubt, as to every specification and charge being fully and fairly sustained; and now, believing that this specification must be, and will be, sustained by the court, we will pass on to the second specification.

The second specification is, "that the defendant co-operated in organizing, and desired to organize, and agreed with others to organize, before and during November, 1875, for the avowed purpose of putting into practice his Organic Union principles, the new organization at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, preparing and commending to the public

the declaration and preliminary statement, accompany its basis of fellowship, thus promoting a new society, which receives all Christians, whether dismissed or undismitted, and all evangelical ministers, without exception; provides for the examination of candidates for the ministry, and for sending forth ministers to preach the gospel; and has joined himself hereto, and accepting a call, and becoming its first pastor, being examined in theology, and installed by an irresponsible, because undelegated council, and all this without leave of, or dismission from, his Presbytery, and against advice to the contrary, and is at present pastor of said society."

If this specification be true, then, what the defendant has done is so utterly inconsistent, so fearfully in contravention of the polity of the Presbyterian Church, that we are amazed that any Presbytery could stand by and witness it, without resorting to its episcopal power to put a stop to it, and then, if persisted in, to proceed judicially against the defendant, for disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church. But is the specification in all its details true? Let the proof answer. The church in question was organized November 8th and 10th, 1875, and now did he prior to this, desire, and agree, and co-operate with others to organize the church in question, for the avowed purpose of putting into practice his Organic Union principles, etc., as stated in the specification. Here is the proof. The defendant says: "I accepted the invitation to preach at Linwood and Mt. Lookout for a year, before the Union Church was organized; but it was mutually agreed that we would look toward the organization of a Union Church." And again, he says: "I did approve of the movement, and after they had sent for me to preach for them, I counseled and co-operated with those who did organize this church."

It will be remembered, as it is in testimony, that the defendant, when released some years ago from the pastorate of the Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, asked his release on the ground that he desired to give his time exclusively to the advocacy and propagation of Organic Union principles, and upon this ground the relation was dissolved, and how the Presbytery did dissolve the relation on this ground, is a mystery to me, and must be to every true Presbyterian. Then, upon the dissolution of this relation, the defendant went to work publishing the "*Christian Unity*," a paper devoted exclusively to the advocacy of Organic Union principles; then he is heard of here, and there, all over the country, delivering addresses on the same theme, claiming at the same time, as he did, that public oral addresses and the press were the most efficient instrumentalities in furthering his scheme or system, as it has been called! and the strangest of all

things is, that in the face of all this noise, from public oral addresses and the press, sounding throughout the bounds of the Presbytery and the Synod, and far beyond, members of the court, who ought to know better, claim that the common fame on which this prosecution is grounded, had no existence. Leaving off public oral addresses and the press, as efficient instrumentalities in promoting organic oneness, where next is the defendant found, and what is he doing? We find him at Linwood and Mt. Lookout, acting in the capacity of a stated supply to a Presbyterian Church? whose faith and order he had obligated himself to maintain—not at all, but to several Baptists and Episcopalians, and a few Presbyterians, who were, from the teachings of the defendant, convinced of the essential sinfulness of their denominationalism, and would now come together on the ground of their common agreements and organize the “Union Christian Church at Linwood and Mt. Lookout,” and this movement, the defendant says, he approved, and that when they had sent for him to preach to them, he did then counsel and co-operate with them, in and about the organization of that church, and did thus put into practice his Organic Union principles, upon a basis of fellowship excluding all God’s truth, beyond the statement of a few leading truths, leaving the balance, which is “profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” out in the cold, without recognition, or practice, and did thus commend to the public this minimum basis, with its declaration and preliminary statements, and so did promote a new society, which receives all Christians, whether dismissed or undismitted, whether baptized or unbaptized, whether believing in or not believing in the infallibility of the Bible, or in the proper humanity of Christ, which receives all evangelical ministers without exception, examines candidates for the ministry, and sends them forth to preach the gospel, especially the gospel of organic oneness. Did he then join himself to this new society? Then accept a call, and become its first pastor? Then was he examined in theology, and installed by an irresponsible council? And then was all this without leave of, or dismissal from his Presbytery, and against advice to the contrary? And is he, at present, pastor of said society?

The testimony is, that defendant was present at the organization of the new society, and while not acting in an official capacity, yet desired that it should be organized, and upon its organization, it is in proof, that the defendant was unanimously called to be its pastor, and as to his acceptance he himself says, “I have accepted the pastorate of the Union Christian Church at Linwood and Mount Lookout.” And as to

his installation, and the irresponsibility of the council installing him, the proof is, that "the installation of Rev. W. C. McCune took place at half past seven o'clock, in Linwood Hall, before a large number of citizens of Linwood, according to the programme adopted at the council in the afternoon," and as to the irresponsibility of the council installing him, the proof is, that the council was composed of ten ministers belonging to four different evangelical denominations, they were not delegated by any ecclesiastical bodies, but came simply as individuals upon the invitation of the church, and did not assume in any sense to represent their respective denominations, but acted entirely on their own responsibility, and after a full examination by this council as to the defendant's doctrinal soundness, and his motive in undertaking the pastorate office, the pastoral relation between the defendant and the "Union Christian Church at Linwood and Mount Lookout" was constituted, and so far as the defendant is concerned, all that he did do, in and about the organization of the new society, and his becoming its pastor, was done contrary to the advice of one of his brother members of the Presbytery, as may be seen in the letter of Rev. Thomas H. Skinner to him, declining an invitation given by defendant, to take part with others in the recognition of the "Union Christian Church" at Linwood and Mount Lookout.

And now the question is, has the defendant, in view of all the facts, connecting him with the organization, and his installation as pastor of the new society, which is not a Presbyterian Church, not a Baptist Church, not an Episcopal Church, not a Methodist Church, not a Congregational Church, but is, if anything, an anti and undenominational society, intended to exhibit, in the judgment of the defendant, the model New Testament church organization, been true to the standards of the Presbyterian Church, which he received and adopted, and in doing this, took upon himself the obligation to teach and to practice the same—the same, not only as to all the fundamentals of our Presbyterian faith and order, but as to all the details that make complete our system of faith and polity, the mint and anise and cummin, as well as the weightier matters; the latter being what the defendant ought to have done, while the former he ought not to have left undone. We have no zeal in this matter beyond what we conceive to be according to knowledge. We have no personal feeling either for, or against the Committee of Prosecution, or for, or against the defendant. We have looked simply at the law of the case, the charge in the case, and the proof in the case, and are satisfied, that not the shade even of a reasonable doubt exists, as to both charges, and all the specifications being sustained by the proof, that our brother, the

defendant, has for years past, been teaching and practicing "doctrines, principles and views, not only at war with the standards of the Presbyterian Church, but if generally accepted, totally subversive of its constitution, and of the very existence of the Presbyterian denomination itself."

Mr. Moderator and brethren of the court, we submit the case.



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